















*G. H. Perkins*

LETTERS  
OF  
CAPTAIN  
GEO. HAMILTON PERKINS,  
U. S. N.

EDITED AND ARRANGED.

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ALSO, A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE

BY  
COMMODORE GEORGE E. BELKNAP,  
U. S. N.

SECOND EDITION.

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## DEDICATION.

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DEAR ISABEL :

Since the War of the Rebellion your father has been often applied to for information about the stirring times in which he bore such an active and gallant part. - But as his profession required that he should be absent from his country on long cruises, or occupied with its duties when at home, he did not find time to attend to these applications, and they were therefore referred to me. I usually replied by sending extracts from his letters, together with such newspaper notices of him as we possessed, and of these latter I made and kept copies, as they would become worn by use, and ran the risk of being lost.

In this way I learned to realize thoroughly what a brave and earnest man your father was, what devotion and energy he brought to the discharge of his duties, what a keen sense of honor and what a sincere and loyal heart he showed in his interpretation of the oath he had taken to defend his government and flag, and what a valiant soul he displayed in fighting their battles. His letters, also, which your grandmother Perkins has kept from the time of his first cruise, as well as all newspaper mention of him that has come in her way, seemed to merit preservation in some available and

permanent form ; and I have therefore arranged them, with other records of his past life, in this volume, which I believe will be valuable both now and in the future to those connected with your father, and above all to you, his only child.

I wish that it were possible that any letters of his own, or any words that others might say or write about him, could ever half portray the brightness and quickness, the warmheartedness and romantic attraction, of his youthful character.

Your affectionate aunt,

SUSAN G. PERKINS.



## LETTERS.

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GEORGE HAMILTON PERKINS was born October 20, 1836, at Hopkinton, New Hampshire. The northern part of this town is intersected by the Contoocook river, and a settlement on its banks called Contoocookville was the property and home of his father, Hamilton Eliot Perkins, at the time of George's birth. The present home of his parents is Concord, N. H.

His ancestors on his father's side lived in the vicinity of Salem, Massachusetts. His grandfather, Roger Eliot Perkins, left Massachusetts early in life and settled in Hopkinton, New Hampshire. He was a man of great energy and enterprise. George's mother was Miss Clara Bartlett George, of Concord. She was descended from a family of Georges who settled originally in Watertown, Massachusetts.

George is the oldest son in a family of eight children, six sons and two daughters, of whom four survive. From his earliest youth he has been distinguished for his courage and quickness, and he was prematurely expert in all manly exercises. He gave occasion for the neighborhood to relate many stories of his boyish daring. He was never afraid, and he never gave up. His first plainly spoken phrase was "no matter," and when, as a tiny boy, trudging with his sled along the middle of the road, he defiantly gave this reply, refusing either to turn out, or to tell who he would have for President, to some voters packed in great sleighs on their way to a political meeting, they finally gave him

the road and three cheers for his pluck as they passed him.

When but a little older, he went into a field to try and catch one of his father's colts, a large and spirited animal, whose head he was not tall enough to reach. The field was above the falls of the Contoocook, where it is broad and swift, and of considerable width. After a hard chase the colt took to the stream and swam to the other side. Without a moment's hesitation George threw off his clothes and plunged in after him. He cornered him on the opposite shore against a fence, which he had to climb to adjust the bridle (this he had tied around his neck in swimming over), and after a struggle, bitted the refractory animal, and *swimming him back* over the river put on his clothes, and brought the horse in triumph to the stable. He has always been passionately fond of animals and has great power over them.

When George was eight years old his father removed with his family to Boston and engaged in the African trade. One of the ships which he employed in this business was a barque named the *Palestine*, which had an unusually high deck. One warm summer day when it was in port, George, not yet nine years old and a little fellow for his age, was going over it with his father, and began to tease to "go in swimming." His father gave his consent on condition that George would "dive from the deck," never dreaming that he would dare attempt it. What was his terror on looking back a moment after to find that George had thrown off his clothes and had leaped directly from the deck into the water! His father often speaks of this as "pretty bold diving for such a small boy."

After three years his father became tired of business cares and life in a city, and returned to his quiet coun-

try home in Contoocook, and here George resumed a life to which he was greatly attached. He could surround himself with the animals and pets that he loved, and being the oldest son, and favorite of a large country establishment, he was not only happy but extremely active and useful. The only drawback to such a life for a boy was the dislike it fostered to the confinement that was absolutely necessary to advance his education in books, and it was wholly owing to the determination and perseverance of his mother that he made at this time any suitable progress in his studies. She, in spite of the overwhelming cares of a large place and a large family, and the obstacle of George's own reluctance, against which she was obliged to contend with energy, compelled him to learn his lessons, and found time to hear him recite them herself. A journal which she insisted upon his keeping, for practice in writing, gives some account of his occupations during his eleventh year, and is now a source of great amusement to his family. It is an unvarnished record of his daily life, and shows the interest he took in every bird and beast on the place, as well as giving evidence of what a busy and helpful life he led for a boy of his age. In it he complains a good deal of his mother's strictness (often spelled strickness) in keeping him at his books, but he never seems tired of any *active* work. I will give a few extracts :

“THURSDAY.—It has rained all day and taken off some of the snow. I did my lessons and took care of the Black Hawk\* and the other horses, because the men had to go away. In the afternoon I sold a horse, and then I carried a man in the sleigh to Mr. Gould's on business.

“FRIDAY.—This afternoon I took the Black Hawk

\*A favorite horse.

and Mr. Stanley, and Roger took Uncle Paul's horse and David, and we went to the lower village to an exhibition. We had a very pleasant time till we got most home, when the thills dropped down on Black Hawk's heels and he tipped Mr. Stanley and me out of the sleigh, and got away from us and ran almost home. I took the other sleigh and went after him and led him home, and the only harm done was he corked himself a little. Thus closed the labors of the day! I lent four chains to E. Burbank, two binding and two ox chains, and one ax; and to William Leslie two horse chains, one ox chain, and a goad stick.

"MONDAY.—I did not expect to study any to-day as Frankie is sick, but mother saw me go by the window and called me in, and of all the scoldings that she has ever given me I got one to-day, worse than all. To-day I have set some hens, and I expect to have a great flock of chickens, ducks, turkeys, and geese this year, for I have set a good many."

Sometimes George takes on quite a high-flown style in this journal and says, that as his mother tells him he *must* write, he will "therefore relate that we expected Harriet\* to-day. The father went to Concord to meet her. When the cars came in the mother looked anxiously for the long expected child; the father got out, but no child came with him. It is now dark and the busy little village of Contoocook is wrapt in stillness, so good night, gentle reader. I forgot to say that to-day our black cow was blessed with a very handsome calf."

Under another date he records the following agreement with his mother:

"My mother solemnly agreed to give George H. Perkins one loaf of cake, if the said George H. Perkins goes through his geography in ten days.

"MOTHER PERKINS."

\*His eldest sister away at school.

These extracts give some idea of his life between eleven and twelve years of age. He went with more or less regularity, during his early years, to the academy at Hopkinton, and afterwards to a well known one at Gilmanton, and was at the latter when his parents decided to accept for him an appointment as midshipman. This was given him by an old and valued friend of his mother, the late Hon. Charles H. Peaslee, at that time member of Congress, and afterwards collector of the port of Boston. Mr. Peaslee was obliged somewhat to *urge* the acceptance of the appointment upon George's parents, who were reluctant to give up their oldest son so wholly to the service of his country; but he finally prevailed, and George commenced to prepare for the examination prior to his admission at the Naval Academy. As his family was not at this time living in Concord, George was placed there under a private tutor, a sensible, well informed man who became warmly attached to him and prophesied highly of his future.

George's life at the Naval Academy could best be told by some of his classmates. His letters home were so full of inquiries about everything connected with his own family that it left little room for any information about himself and his surroundings, in which he seemed to have but little comparative interest. This has always been a peculiarity of his. At the most exciting time of the late Rebellion when in the midst of dangers in which his own life and his country's fate were exposed to the most imminent peril, he would write pages of eager questions to know "what everybody was doing at home." The fear of losing his identification with home life seemed to cause him more anxiety than any of the great dangers by which he was surrounded. His daily letters home, extending now

over a period of thirty years, are, and always have been, full of minute inquiries about home matters, as if they were the only things worth while in the world. The horses, dogs, and pets are all remembered and asked for, and his letters are full of plans about "always being at home with all I love." It may be taken for granted that at the naval school he was wide awake and full of mischief. He wrote home cheerfully, but generally regarded it as highly probable that he should "bilge." But this prospect did not seem to depress him greatly; he always had in reserve some scheme by which he should plunge into some prosperous business and emerge triumphant, while the older officers and professors would never cease to regret that they had deprived the service of such an ornament. This buoyancy of spirit never forsakes him, and often breaks out in an amusing manner, even when he is suffering from severe fits of homesickness, or from illness. It is a valuable possession to a strong character, and illustrates the saying,—

"A merry heart goes all the way,  
A sad goes but a mile a."

Judging from all accounts George, on the whole, seems to have been rather a favorite with his superior officers and the professors, though he himself attributes his immunity from reproof to the fact that he was a little fellow and was hidden under "Old Goldsborough's" huge figure, when the eyes of that stately old commandant were roving around to discover the authors of mischievous pranks and irregularities.

George's chief public exploit while a midshipman at the Academy was during one of the practice cruises, when he performed a feat at target shooting which was considered worthy of being reported in the newspapers. It appeared first in a Baltimore paper and was copied

in New Hampshire, and I have been told lately, by an old Hopkinton man, of the local pride with which he read the account, "because George was a boy from his own town." Unfortunately none of these printed accounts has been preserved, and I give here George's own description from a letter written home at that time. "We had target practice one day, and it came my turn to shoot. There was quite a swell on at the time, which made it very difficult to get any kind of a shot, but when I fired, I hit the target, which was a barrel with a small flag on it, thrown out about three quarters of a mile distant. Such a thing as hitting a target at sea with the ship in motion and a swell on is considered almost impossible, so they all said it was luck. But another target of the same size was put out at the same distance, and when I fired again I tore this all to pieces. Then the crew all cheered and made quite a hero of me, but still some said it must be luck, so a third target was put out, of exactly the same kind, and in exactly the same manner. This one I did not quite hit, but my shot fell so near that all agreed that it was *not* luck, but that I was a first-rate shot with broadside guns. Since then I have been looked upon as having a very correct eye for distances, and am always called upon to fire whenever experiments are made."

This accuracy of aim proved of great service afterwards, when, commanding the *Chickasaw* in Mobile Bay, on the 5th of August, 1864, George aimed the guns that struck so squarely the vital parts of the rebel ram *Tennessee*, and induced her surrender.

After graduating at the Naval Academy in 1856 George was ordered to the sloop-of-war *Cyane*, Captain Robb. This ship was sent immediately to Aspinwall, where an outbreak against the United States was threatened. From such letters which he wrote from

there as have been preserved, I make the following extracts, preceding them by the first ones sent back by the pilot out of New York harbor, and the one written on the voyage. His farewells to his home are very touching. As I read them again after all these years, they make my heart swell and my eyes fill with tears of pity for the homesick boy. At sea he begins a journal letter, where the poor boy's pangs at leaving his native shore are succeeded by those of a hard attack of seasickness. He says,—

“I have taken leave of good beds, clean food, and all the comforts of my home, and have in exchange the cramped-up steerage, a dark hole lighted by a tallow candle, a hammock where I sleep, and my food is salt beef and heavy bread, with an occasional dessert of boiled dried apples mixed with bread and flavored with whiskey.” There were no cans of preserved meats or fruits or condensed milk for midshipmen in those days. I remember in one of his letters, which I cannot find now, that he says, “Hullo! I must stop writing, or I shall lose my supper; there's a worm running away with my biscuit!” His discomforts are increased by the officers being in “three watches,” and thus unable ever to get a good night's sleep. The weather, too, is unusually bad, and brings on a long-continued, heavy swell, in which the “ship for days almost rolls her guns under.”

He thus proceeds: “I have a good deal to do on board this ship; one of my charges is the spirit room, and another is the magazine; but never fear, dear mother, the whiskey is so bad I cannot touch it, and if we get into a fight the magazine is below the water line and no ball can reach me, and there is no danger unless the ship gets on fire; so in spite of being between gunpowder and whiskey, be assured that your ‘hopeful



son' is quite safe. In fact, the *cockroaches* give me more trouble than anything else." At a later date, after they have entered a warm latitude, he writes in great enjoyment of the beauty of the southern seas. The waters are full of dolphins and new and curious fish, which he amuses himself catching and studying, and which prove a great source of entertainment. Above all he is enchanted with the beautiful tropical nights. "These lovely evenings!" he writes, "I cannot describe them! I generally spend them on the forecastle, and listen to the men playing on their various instruments and singing. Sometimes it seems as if the ship were a floating music box, only the sounds are not quite so delicate to the ear. We have some good singers on board who really make very good music."

But as the ship approaches Aspinwall his homesickness breaks out again, and he seems to realize his distance and separation. He bursts out in declarations like the following, frequent enough for many years in his constant letters: "I think of you at home almost all the time, and I love you all dearly. How I *wish* I could be with you!" This passionate love of home, which amounts to worship, and which seems to spring from a natural instinct to make it sacred, has been a marked characteristic of great races. Among the Romans it developed into the consecration of the hearthstone and the beautiful worship of the Lares and Penates. Every thoughtful person knows how much this trait tends to the preservation of all that is best in a family or a country.

George gives a dismal account of Aspinwall as he found it in November of 1856. He says, "It is an awful place. Everything about it is *low*. It is built on a low island; the Americans here are of a low

order, and the natives are a low, miserable set of beings, and the situation of the town is so low and surrounded by marshes, whose odor is so disgusting, that a low state of health and a low state of spirits is the result of breathing such an atmosphere. There are five great rickety hotels scattered among an equally rickety group of smaller houses, which constitute the town, which is not attractive in appearance.

“There is nothing raised on shore; all the fruit comes from St. Thomas or Havana; and there seems to be nothing going on but dog-fighting and cock-fighting. Yet the inhabitants are ready and willing for a row with the Americans, and they think there certainly will be one, as our minister does not get the required satisfaction for the Panama massacre of last April. If war is declared the *Cyane* will remain here, so all the air castles I have built about my pleasant times at home next summer must go to ruin. The great excitement here is when the steamer gets in. The amount of travel is immense, and the passengers stay here over night. Most of them are very hard looking cases. Those returning from California wear revolvers in their belts, and look hard and reckless. A great many look sick and worn out, and as if they were going home to die.”

This was the year of General Walker's filibustering expedition in Central America, and he was at this time being besieged in Rivas by a force of seven thousand natives. George says, “A great many of Walker's men came in here on the English ships, and they were in a most miserable condition; many of them were just dying with smallpox and yellow fever,”—and he speaks of General Walker and his officers when they leave Central America by the way of Aspinwall, saying, “A more desperate set I never saw.” In June,

1857, the *Cyane* goes to Greytown to bring up the sick and wounded of Walker's army, and George is much affected by their sufferings. He writes, "I can give you no idea of the sad time we have had. On arriving at Greytown we found about one hundred and twenty officers and soldiers in the hands of the Costa Ricans. Most of them were in a horrible condition; many of them were at the point of death; some were covered with wounds, others with disgusting sores, and all were lousy and dirty, and everything else you can think of that is sickening. We took them all on board and did all we could for them, but we had very bad weather on our way back to Aspinwall, and all had a hard time; several died before we got there. I had to go out in a boat and bury one man. We went well out to sea and after I had read some prayers over him the sailors threw the body over the side, all saying, 'God bless you' together, as it sank. It made me feel pretty sober, and I read the prayers as well as I could, but never having turned my attention to the ministry as a profession, I suppose I did not do my part in what was just the right manner."

In fact, during these months that he spent at Aspinwall George saw a good deal that was sorrowful, and was much affected at the death of Lieutenant Strain, a brilliant naval officer, whose ill-fated expedition across the Isthmus of Panama, in order to discover a route for the canal, was the subject of a series of interesting articles in *Harper's Magazine* in 1855. George describes his death and burial as follows: "A very sad affair happened day before yesterday. Lieutenant Strain, the same officer who suffered so much on this Isthmus some time ago, was ordered to this ship and came down on the *Illinois* to join us. The steamer arrived in the afternoon, and he did not come directly

on board ship but stopped at a hotel on shore. He was almost immediately seized with the fever and died that very night. Only twelve hours after his death he was buried, and twenty-four hours before his burial he was laughing and talking. He was buried at a place called Monkey Hill, among a lot of negroes, in a strange land, where there was no one who cared the least for him. His funeral was attended by a few officers who were strangers to him, and, of course, showed but little feeling. Twelve sailors fired a volley over his grave, and three negroes covered him up; and thus ended the days of one of our *distinguished* naval officers. I wonder what they would do with me!"

George hears soon after of the death of a classmate, and writes: "I occasionally hear from the Academy, and the news is generally cheering and awakens pleasant recollections, but this time it was the reverse. The letters contained an account of the death of Midshipman Graham, an old friend of mine, who went out in the *Constellation*. He died at Constantinople and was buried there with military honors. He was very handsome and a fine scholar." This fact is interesting to the family, as George's uncle, John H. George, afterwards married, for his second wife, the sister of Midshipman Graham, although at this time the families lived far apart and were totally unacquainted. It is not surprising that such melancholy occurrences should affect George's thoughts and turn them more than ever, if that were possible, towards his home. He writes me, "If you could imagine the *joy* with which I greet the letters from home you would intercede for me and have many more written." Again it is, "Dear mother, when I do not get a letter I am always afraid you are not well. I try to think that all is right, but I am not exactly *easy* in my mind. Tell me what you did during

the Christmas holidays, and if I can persuade myself that you are only well and happy I will try and be contented." The choice of a profession for his next younger brother is under discussion, and he writes home with great seriousness: "When you go away from home you will learn something of the coldness of the world, and find out the importance of study. Always being at home under the influence of advice from an affectionate mother and with an over-indulgent father makes it hard to tell if, when thrown on your own resources, you will have the moral courage to withstand temptation." In February, 1857, he says, "The talk about war grows stronger, and the squadrons have been ordered to rendezvous here. I have just come down from general quarters where they read the 'Articles of War.' I *trembled* at that part which says, 'Any man or officer who runs while in action shall suffer death.' I thought of the saying, 'He who fights and runs away shall live to fight another day.'" So he was bound to be hopeful and make the best of the matter, and these extracts from his letters show that he did not get dull in spite of his monotonous life and depressing surroundings. He creates some variety to furnish him new material for almost every letter, and he is lively, if only with indignation. He never spares himself if there is anything to be done, but usually does far beyond his strength. The steamer *George Law* gets aground on entering the harbor, and he has "command of a boat to go to her assistance and take off the passengers." He has the "fanciest boat and lands all the ladies," but gets "such a headache" he can scarcely write. Again he is "out in the rain all day picking up the cargo of our launch which was upset on a pleasure excursion. The American minister, Mr. Morse, was of the party. There were none drowned, but I am nearly sick to-day with a cold." He enjoys

getting up races "between the *Cyane's* gig and that of the British ship *Dolphin*," and "finds it exciting."

Under date of Feb. 26, 1857, he writes, "I will now give you an account of the way Washington's birthday was celebrated on board the U. S. sloop-of-war *Cyane*. The ship was dressed in flags and looked very handsome. At meridian we fired a salute and *spliced the main braces*, that is, gave the men two drinks of whiskey. The ward room officers gave a blowout and invited the midshipmen, who are never known to refuse such invitations. It consisted of everything that blowouts generally do. The captain was very entertaining, but the midshipmen were particularly quiet, and only distinguished themselves when it came time for eating and drinking. Towards night it rained and blew fearfully. The men had smuggled off a great deal of liquor, and the crew were nearly all drunk, but they seemed happy and jolly, and were singing all over the ship. Suddenly the singing stopped, and as I was sitting forward I heard whispers pass that a man had been stabbed! I fastened on to one of the men and made him tell me where the man was. He took me down to a dark hole underneath all the hammocks, and I sent for the first lieutenant and a light. When he came we found the man cut very badly, but he was very drunk, and you know the saying, 'A drunken man can't be killed,' so this one is now in a fine way of recovery. The man that stabbed him was found and confined." As he closes his description George makes this moral reflection: "I have no doubt but Washington's birthday is to many people, and in many ways, a day of happiness, but it is also the cause of a great many sore heads."

The following letter, which he wrote home during this part of the cruise, is too characteristic to be omitted, for it displays his spirit of adventure, and is a type of

many received during his youthful cruises. It begins, as is frequently the case, by acknowledging with delight his letters from home "which have made me happy ever since they came." Then he says, "I have been twice on shore hunting since I wrote last. The first time I went, it was after parrots and monkeys, but being warned, after we started, that the woods were dangerous, we did not dare to go in very far, and were not successful, for in trying to get at some monkeys that we saw, we scared up three panthers, and as I had nothing but shot in my gun I was afraid to fire, as they are very bad when wounded; so I decided that 'discretion was the better part of valor,' and went to a hut which I saw and which proved to be inhabited by an old native woman and her two daughters. They were very kind and pleasant, and I passed the afternoon there trying to talk Spanish with them. But when we went hunting again a few days after we did not have quite such good luck. We went ashore, borrowed a rickety old boat, and getting all ready, with the exception of something to eat, we started across the bay, a distance of four miles. We went across very well, but in attempting to land we found it was very dangerous, for the breakers ran so high that they upset our boat. But we managed to land at last, and hauled the boat ashore without much damage. After hunting three or four hours and having pretty good luck, it came on to blow very hard and we thought we had better go back, though the natives told us to wait till the gale was over. But it was getting so late we were afraid we should have to stay all night and decided to try to get off. We lashed our guns, and the natives shoved us well out from shore, but the moment we tried to sail, our boat keeled over on her beam ends and half filled with water. This was not very pleasant, for in whatever direction

you looked you could see the play of a shark's fin. The boat soon righted but the wind blew so hard and the waves were so high, that we found we could neither return to the shore nor go towards the ship, which was about seven miles away, and in such a direction that we should have to run before the wind. Then, whenever we turned towards the shore the breakers drove us on the rocks, which rose all about us. At last we saw a little cove where it seemed as if we might be safe if we could only reach it, and we decided to make for that at all hazards. We got within forty feet of it, and began to think we were safe at last, when our fore sheet got foul, and a squall just then striking the boat, over she went in spite of all, and if the foremast had not been carried away I do not suppose I should be writing to you now. We had to work hard to right the boat, and all the time we were overboard, which was about two hours, I expected to be bitten by a shark, and the breakers were so strong they would continually knock us off the boat. But at last she righted, and we just barely cleared the rocks, landing in the smooth water beyond. We were both nearly exhausted, having had nothing to eat since morning, and it was now eight in the evening. When we got on shore my companion told me he had been bitten by a shark while in the water, so we rested a little while, but the bite was not very deep, and then we began to think what we would do.

“ We found we had landed close to an impenetrable forest, but a river flowing into the sea just there made a little beach where we could move about. We decided to bail out the boat and sleep in that, if the wind did not go down, and after bailing about an hour we got most of the water out of her. The moon had come up by this time and the wind had gone down, and we determined to try again and reach the ship. This time



we succeeded after about three hours' sailing. When we arrived on board we found the Captain and the other officers had been very anxious about us. They were afraid we had been driven on shore among the breakers and lost. The Captain had ordered all the boats to be ready at sunrise to search for us. When my companion got on board he was hardly able to walk, but I was only a little stiff the next morning. The natives thought we had had a wonderful escape, for the bay is full of sharks. This, I believe, is all that has happened to me since I wrote last."

In June, 1857, he hears that he has been made an uncle and writes, "I thought a great deal last night about the new baby, and I do not know but that I ought to write a special letter on her account, yet, although her affectionate uncle has joyfully assumed his heavy responsibility, he feels that he is not great at composition. The only thing he could think of to do was to speak for the under jaw of a large shark, which they are now cutting up on deck, as a present for his new niece. He is sure that she is pretty but he hardly knows what to say about a baby."

Soon after this date the *Cyane* is ordered North. She comes to Boston, but George's spirits sink when he finds that although so near, he cannot come home. He writes, "I could not help thinking as I walked up and down on the morning watch, how completely I have given up my home, and how little, during my lifetime, I shall be at home and with those I love best. Just think, if I go to the southward again I shall not see you for a year more at least, and then seven long years will have passed away since I left you all, and now little I have seen of you in that time! This naval life is pleasant enough for those who have no ties to bind them, and often seems pleasant enough to me, for I have many

good friends in the service ; we are often anchored at pleasant stations where I am able to see a great deal and enjoy delightful society ; but yet—I *wish* I could be *more at home* ; and sometimes my only comfort and only cheerful thought is the knowledge that you are all well there.”

The *Cyane* proceeds to the northward and George writes from St. John's, Newfoundland, “As I had the midwatch last night, I did not get up this morning when the ship was brought to, so when I went on deck at about eight o'clock, I found we were anchored in the most beautiful little harbor I had ever seen or imagined. High hills nearly surrounded it, and most picturesquely situated on one of these stood the city. It looks very pretty from the ship, but they say it does not prove so attractive on a nearer view, and smells throughout most overpoweringly fishy. We have been at Halifax since I had a chance to write, and I had a very gay time there. But during my gaieties I often thought of you all, and wished you were enjoying everything with me. And when I am quiet, as well as when I am gay, I think of you all, all the time ; and between *all* the *alls* you get pretty much *all* my thoughts.”

From Newfoundland the ship went directly to Hampton Roads, Va., and he writes from there, “Your letters were all received at last, and read with you do not know what pleasure ! I was so glad to hear that you were all well and passed a pleasant Thanksgiving. I wish I could spend one at home with all the family ; it seems as if I could be more contented then. Do you know that when I read your request to send home a lock of my hair, it gave me a regular fit of the blues ? To think that I cannot be at home enough to make that unnecessary ! But you shall have my best looking lock. Perhaps a little of my moustache would do. It is really

quite a respectable one now. Well, if the lock of hair enclosed is not enough, please let me know quick, because I am going to have my hair cut short."

"HAMPTON ROADS, VA., November 6, 1857.

"The steamer has just come in and they all got letters but me. You have no idea how much good a letter does one on board ship. If you could only see with what anxiety the officers and men gather around the capstan when the letters are given out—and especially your brother—I think you would never miss writing."

The *Cyane* was next ordered to Hayti to demand the release of an American merchant captain whom the Haytien authorities had imprisoned. But when she arrived, it was found that the difficulty had been settled and that the captain had returned to the United States. The *Cyane*, however, remained there a few days and gave the officers a chance to see the island. George writes, "We all went on shore and the place is really worth seeing. Cape Haytien was built and owned by the French, and was called 'Little Paris.' In 1842 it was shaken down by an earthquake and twenty thousand inhabitants buried beneath the ruins. It is beautifully situated on a level plateau, surrounded on all sides by lofty hills, except where it faces the bay. The streets are paved and regularly laid out, and over the ruined houses on each side beautiful vines and shrubbery are growing luxuriantly, and it seemed to me as if every branch was covered with beautiful, bright-colored birds who sang the sweetest notes I ever heard. It all made me feel *very romantic* as I walked about. There must have been once much wealth here, judging from the remains of some of the houses, for they show a good deal of splendor. About twelve miles from the city, on one of the highest hills, is a very large and strong

castle built by a Count Christophe. He used to bury there every year a large sum of money which he took from the revenues, and then he would shoot the negro whom he made bury it, so that no one would know the secret. I heard several other yarns about the place, which I have not time to tell now. The negroes, who are in possession of the island, assume all sorts of titles. There is an emperor, and there are dukes, lords, etc. Some of them are quite well educated, but they all put on such dignified airs and are so afraid of not being thought equal to white folks, that many of them are very funny."

In January, 1858, George was detached from the *Cyane*, and almost immediately ordered to the *Release*, Commander Wm. G. Parker. This vessel was first sent as supply ship to the Mediterranean, and afterwards to South America with the Paraguay expedition. George's cruise to the Mediterranean occupied three months, nearly all the time being spent at sea in the slow sailing ship, but during his short stay at Spezia he found time to make a rapid trip to some of the famous Italian cities. He modestly deplores his own inability to appreciate as he ought the wonderful works of art about him, and wishes that others of his family could be with him, "who," he says, "could understand and enjoy it all." He found time to choose pretty and tasteful gifts to bring home, and to make some pleasant acquaintances who have never forgotten him. At this time he was very fond of society, and in one social accomplishment he was almost without a peer. His quick ear for music, and perfect ease of movement, made him a remarkably graceful dancer, and it was a pleasure to watch him on the floor.

At the time of his return to the United States, difficulties had broken out between our government and

Paraguay. The notorious Lopez was at that time President of the latter republic, and was not inclined to make the needful amends for some infraction of international law. The United States, therefore, sent out a large fleet under command of Commodore Shubrick, with orders to demand reparation, or to make war in case of refusal. The *Release* was to accompany the expedition as storeship; and also to be used to ascend the rivers where vessels of heavier draught could not go. She fitted out in New York, and during that time George gratified his spirit of investigation by becoming familiar with every part of the city. He went to all the theatres and places of amusement, and then, with a policeman, visited the slums and low haunts. Of the plays he sees he writes with all the brightness and freshness of his time of life. "They seem to me most beautiful, and perhaps it is because I am so fresh from sea, but often the scenes on the stage bring tears to my eyes." When he sees the horrible condition of the other parts of the city, he says: "I could not have imagined myself, nor can I possibly convey to you at home, an idea of the misery and degradation to which human nature is reduced in places like these." And whatever he sees and hears, it seems but to strengthen his love for *home*.

Being made the confidant of some family troubles among his friends, he writes: "You cannot think how glad I feel that I have such a good and happy home, and I am very *blue* because I cannot be there now. I suppose you will always keep Charlie and Tiger;\* I often long to see them. It seems to me we are a great deal happier and better off in many ways than the majority of the world. So many people do not seem to be *really* happy. They laugh and talk, but

\* A favorite horse and dog.

still it seems as though there was always a sort of unhappy and discontented feeling underneath. If they are rich, they are sick with dissipation, and if they are poor, they are cross because they have n't money enough to be dissipated, or there is something that is wanting, while at our home it is always so cheerful and healthy that it seems as if any one might live forever, and every day be a pleasant one. I am going to try and have a dog, something like Tige, to take to sea. I miss Polly \* very much, and when you have chicken for dinner you must be sure and give him some, for he is very fond of it."

"NEW YORK, U. S. S. RELEASE, NOV. 1, 1858.

"We are about to haul out into the stream, and very soon all communication with the shore will be broken off and sea life will begin in its reality. If we have good luck, we shall get to Buenos Ayres in forty-five days. *Forty-five days!* Just looking at the horizon! But still, if I receive letters from you when I get to Montevideo and you are well, it will be better to me than seeing the land; but oh, mother, I cannot help wishing that I could stay at home, indeed, that we could all always live at home. Yet I know we ought to be satisfied, for so far our home is such a good one." To his sister he says, "When you write tell me *every little thing*—how you passed Thanksgiving especially. I wish I could sit around the 'festive board' with you then. It is now the eighth Thanksgiving since I have been at home. How time flies, and we are all growing old quite fast! I believe now that mother and father are younger than any of us, and it is such a comfort to me to go from home leaving you all so well. Be sure and write me all about Hattie's baby. I should like to keep on writing and writing, for this let-

\* A parrot he brought from Central America.

ter seems a connecting link with you all, and I hate to break it. I enclose my appointment as acting master ; please put it with my other papers."

Instead of the forty-five days reckoned upon, it was *sixty-three* before the *Release* arrived at Montevideo. The first month of the voyage the weather was bad and it was hard work, and much of the time it was "watch and watch" between George and another officer. He writes while at sea: "We had no pleasant weather until we were well south, and then it came on calm, since which time we have made but little progress; indeed, for a week we have almost lain still, and the captain and all hands begin to think the old ship is bewitched. I remained upon deck to-night when the other officers went to the cabin, because it is one of those beautiful evenings at sea from which I cannot take my eyes, but no sooner was I alone than I began to think of you all. We get on finely together on board this ship, which is lucky, as we have such a long passage. A sailor is singing to a doleful tune something about a fair lass he left behind him. We occasionally see a sail on the horizon, and that is our greatest excitement, but we have not yet spoken any ship."

At a later date he writes: "We have passed through the trade-winds and are now in the doldrums, and expect the S. E. trades to-morrow. It is very warm. I have been trying to catch a shark that has been playing about the ship for some time. We catch a good many flying fish and they are very good eating."

The *Release* next had a long and tiresome time beating around Cape St. Roque, and his next date is "December 13, 1858. We are now further off than we were eight days ago. We shall never get to Buenos Ayres at this rate. A ship has just come in sight and is dead ahead; we are all excited. If I am to get a

chance to send this by her, I can write no more now. I am very well. We are in latitude  $1^{\circ}$  north; in longitude  $35^{\circ}$ ."

On the 2d of January, 1859, the *Release* arrived at Montevideo, where George finds the climate delightful, and is greatly pleased to discover that fine horses are plentiful enough for him to have all the riding and driving he wants. The fleet are all assembled, and everything is animated and pleasant. The Spanish customs are novel, and he has an opportunity to see a bull fight, but does "not like it very much, though three horses and five bulls are killed."

The fleet were now ordered to ascend the Parana river, and Commodore Shubrick went up as far as Corrientes to meet Lopez. George writes: "The difficulty will probably be settled without fighting, though Lopez has a large army and fine forts and is quite well prepared to receive us; and if we get into a row, it may go rather hard with us at first, as this is a small vessel and can go up the river whatever happens. I shall probably be in it, which I shall like, on the whole, now I am here. As we come up through the country the lower classes seem to be almost in a wild state, and the little huts they live in are wretched, but they are all 'beggars on horseback,' and ride so much that they can hardly walk, horses are so plenty. In the towns the business is chiefly carried on by English and Germans. There is always a 'plaza' in the towns, where the band plays evenings, and where the ladies appear dressed in the latest fashions, except that they wear mantillas instead of bonnets. Game is plentiful and I have fine times hunting, especially the large game of the pampas, which is really exciting. I am anxious to shoot a South American tiger." This George finally accomplished after many efforts and much exposure.



“JANUARY 20.

“Our fleet is now coming down the river, for our difficulty with the Paraguayan government is settled. We are taking it leisurely and I am enjoying myself very much. I go hunting and fishing every day. I never saw so much game. The trees are full of all sorts of birds and fish are just as plentiful in the water, and there are ducks and swans and monkeys and snakes, and everything that flies or crawls or swims, that I ever heard of; and there is large game enough, too, to make it exciting. The river is high now, and the country is so inundated that I can penetrate way into the forest in a boat. I go every day, but don't get any chance at a tiger, though I often think I am on the track of one, but it generally turns out to be a river hog. These are curious creatures; the Spanish call them Capinchas. I don't know what they are like. Their heads look like a woodchuck, only a great deal larger, for some of them weigh four hundred pounds. The flesh of the young ones is good eating. They live in kinds of nests which they build, half in and half out of the water. The other day I destroyed the peace of one of their families by killing the mother of some young ones, and the old father came for me in an awful rage and I ran to the boat for my life. He had big, savage-looking tusks, and I was lucky to escape him.

“All along the river shore are villages, consisting of clusters of straw huts, and in the evening I go ashore, taking with me our pilot, who plays the guitar, and I have a dance with some of the pretty native girls. There is a dance called the ‘samaquaker’ (I don't know if that is spelled right, but that is the way it sounds) which is a very pretty native dance. They go through it so gracefully it is a pleasure to watch them. The ‘treat’ consists of the native drink called mate, served hot, and we drink it from a silver cup.”

“JANUARY 20.

“I had quite an adventure to-day, and almost got my tiger, but just missed it enough to get a good joke on myself. I had gone in a boat up a lagoon to hunt and fish, and coming to a little stream left the boat, to hunt on shore, the boat following me. As I went along I came to a place where a log was thrown across a stream and I went over it; but after I had crossed I heard a noise behind me, and looking back I saw a large tiger just crossing over on the log and apparently on my trail. As I had nothing with me but a shotgun, loaded for birds, it was no use to think of attacking him, and I made the best time I could back to the boat. He did not pursue me, but crawled in the tall grass close by the water's edge where the stream was narrow, and we had got to pass him rowing down. I could see by the motion of the tall jungle grass that he was lashing his tail, and as we drew near I could hear him snarl. I can tell you the boat shot by that place like an arrow. I went back to the ship as quick as I could, and taking an officer with me and proper fire-arms to attack such game, rowed back to the place where I left the tiger. Sure enough, there he was, as I *supposed*. We rowed up cautiously, for I did not want to miss fire, knowing I had an ugly customer to deal with. At last, I could see two bright eyes peering at me through the grass—then I was *sure*. I took aim and fired—the eyes disappeared—and there was a short struggle under the grass and bushes. I waited till all was quiet, and then ventured in to the spot very carefully, but much elated at the thought that I had got a tiger at last, when there, stretched out at length, was an immense river hog! Well, we had a good laugh about it, but those river hogs had cheated me so often when I had been after a tiger, that I was really pretty mad.”

“JANUARY 24.

“At last I have killed my tiger, and in the most unexpected way. I did not have to go beating about the jungle, or look for one at the water's edge at night, or anything like that; but to-day, as we were anchored near the bank, three tigers plunged in the river right ahead of the ship. I got out a boat in no time, and was on the river pulling after them. The current drew them towards us, and one of them turned and made for the boat; his ears curled back, his jaws wide open and snarling, and looking terribly fierce and angry. I was so afraid of not hitting him that I waited till he was close on the boat before firing, and the men cried out—for they said afterwards that he was so near that if he had been wounded, or I had missed, we should have been done for. But the ball struck him fair, and in an instant he turned over dead. The current swept him off and directly he sank out of sight. At the noise of the report the other tigers swerved aside and went down stream. I was sorry that I lost the one I shot, for I wanted his skin; but it is a comfort to think I did shoot a tiger at last, and as it was in full view of the ship I shall not lack proof, even if I do not have his skin to show.”

At Montevideo, George was transferred from the *Release* to the *Sabine* in order to return with others of his classmates to the United States, for their passed-midshipman examination.

He received the following commendatory letters from the officers with whom he had sailed, and he was much gratified at their unwavering praise, for upon comparing notes with his other classmates he found that his superior officers had written with unusual warmth in his favor. And I will say here that, as a young man, George was very modest in his estimate of himself, but

inclined to think highly of the gifts of others. The old-fashioned New England education of his early days had not accustomed him to much flattery. As a young man, he always "got along" with others, and always in his letters spoke well of his officers, often affectionately, and led a pleasant life with them on board ship.

FROM CAPTAIN ROBB OF THE CYANE.

"SIR :

"It affords me pleasure to state, that while you were under my command on board the U. S. S. *Cyane*, your character was irreproachable, your attention to duty prompt, and your obedience to orders ready and willing.

"I am respectfully, yr. obt. servant,

"ROBT. G. ROBB, Comd'r."

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FROM CAPTAIN PARKER OF THE RELEASE.

"SIR :

"As you are about to return to the United States for the purpose of attending your examination, allow me to wish you a successful termination thereto. Since you have been attached to this vessel, during a period extending over fourteen months, as a watch officer in charge of the deck, and most of the time as acting master, I have always found your judgment good and your navigation correct, thus meriting my entire approbation. I wish you a speedy passage home and a happy meeting with your family and friends.

"Sincerely and truly your friend,

"WM. A. PARKER,

"Lt. Comd'g. U. S. S. *Release*."

"Mid'n

"GEORGE H. PERKINS,

"Act'g Master U. S. S. *Release*."

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FROM CAPTAIN ADAMS OF THE SABINE.

"Midshipman George H. Perkins, who came home on this ship from Montevideo, displayed so much zeal and intelligence in discharge of his duties during the time, that I have great pleasure in stating I entertain the highest opinion of his abilities and correct morals."

After he had passed his examination, George was able to spend three happy months at his "beloved home." There everything was done to make his visit pleasant, and his own bright, active, cheery spirit had also made it a delightful time to his family and friends. The last of August, 1859, he was ordered to the west coast of Africa as acting master of the U. S. S. *Sumter*. The cruising ground of our ships on this station was from Liberia to St. Paul de Landa, which embraced the gold, ivory, and slave coasts. It was a range that afforded strange adventures, and novel experiences in life, if one would brave the dangers of landing through the surf on an unfamiliar coast. On this coast, from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Cape of Good Hope there is scarcely a tolerable harbor, and the Atlantic rolls in its huge breakers, with unbroken force, along this endless stretch of shore.

This African station was usually considered very dull and monotonous; it lacked any attraction of civilized life, and was called the most unpleasant in a naval officer's experience. It is only the older officers in the service who can now speak of its trials, as since the abolition of slavery our government no longer keeps a squadron there.

But here George's adventurous disposition at least found full play, and neither the dangers of the coast and climate, nor the dullness of its few savage attractions, could permanently depress his bright and determined spirit. But when he first left home, and went to New York to join his ship, he had such an attack of homesickness that it is really heartrending to read his last letters, even now when twenty-seven years have passed since they were written.

Nothing that all the great and gay city of New York contains can divert him. He goes with a naval friend

to Islip, a quiet watering-place on Long Island, to pass away the time until the officers can take up their abode on the ship.

He writes: "All the officers of the ship are from the South, and are strangers to me, except the doctor, whose name is Otis, and who came from Boston. I am planning and trying to get home again if only for a day." He finds this impossible, and then tries to persuade some of the family to come to New York and see him. He makes every suggestion he can think of in favor of the trip, and plans the route, etc. Later on, when settled on board ship, he writes: "The Captain tells us we are to have a pretty hard cruise; that he has strict orders to confine it to our cruising ground on the African coast, and that we cannot stop at Madeira at all. We are now settled on board ship, and I begin to miss my room at home. The one that I am to occupy the next two years is six feet long and three feet wide—some difference you see! We have one officer, a lieutenant, who is known throughout the service as 'Little Jack Stewart,' and who is so funny that he keeps us in roars of laughter whenever he is on board. He will be a great help in keeping up our spirits, for the African coast is said to be trying to a man, and will bring out all our characters. As I am Master I have a great deal to do, and to-day I have been busy all the time getting in stores. When I have been ashore in New York I have met a good many of my friends, and no doubt might have had a very gay time, but I have wanted nothing except to go home, or to see some one from home; and now that I can do neither I wish I was at sea, for the quicker I go the quicker I shall come back. We are in three watches, which is harder than I expected. The arrangements for comfort on board the *Sumter* are not

very complete, and the ship is not very fast nor much on beauty."

"SEPTEMBER 2, 1859.

"We have had full dress muster this afternoon and I made my first appearance in my epaulettes and cocked hat, and I have no doubt but that I was a *glorious* sight!

"Captain Armstrong is very pleasant and kind to me. As these are the last days before the ship sails, his wife stays on board a good deal, and she feels very badly about his going away. She was talking with me this afternoon and said that she could not realize that her husband was going away for so long a while. They have been married eighteen months and this will be the first separation. I often see her in the cabin in tears, and I feel very sorry for her, and so, I think, *this* is what it is to be a captain's wife! I have the mid-watch to-night, and 'you bet' I shall be *awful* homesick, and think of you all the time during my lonely watch."

Two days after this date the pilot brings back his last good-by letter, and the *Sumter* is fairly off for the dreaded West Coast of Africa. When the ship arrives at Prince's Island, about sixty miles from the coast, he writes under date of

"OCTOBER 25, 1859.

"We have come to anchor in a beautiful harbor on the west side of Prince's Island. We came here for water only, and we sail to-morrow for Fernando Po. This island is a Portuguese possession, I mean under the dominion of Portugal, but is owned by a French woman who lives at the northern extremity. The productions are the same as in any tropical climate, and the atmosphere is so humid that it makes the heat es-

pecially intolerable. The inhabitants are mostly slaves belonging to the French woman. I have not got over my homesickness, and though I hear the scenery is fine, I do not yet feel any inclination to go ashore."

"NOVEMBER 1, 1859.

"We are now at Fernando Po, and are here to gain what knowledge we can of its facilities for a coal depot. It is an island close to the coast and belongs to Spain. The Spanish are trying to establish a colony here, but it is too unhealthy, and the whites will not live long enough to get acclimated. The native inhabitants are wild and warlike. They inhabit the mountains, and subsist chiefly on wild fruits. They will not work for love or money.

"At present there are several Spanish, French, and English men-of-war here, and a week ago one of the English ships captured an American slaver with five hundred negroes on board. The English make a good many captures, as their government sustains the efforts to put down the slave-trade better than ours.

"I have suffered a good deal from a tarantula bite on my hand, which swelled so badly that I was alarmed about it, but it is getting well now, and I am thankful to say it is not so painful. The prospect now for our cruise is that it will be very tiresome and have very little variety. At our stations there is no one to be found but a few white people scattered among a lot of negroes. Last Saturday I dined with the Spanish governor of Fernando Po, and he has succeeded in living here thirty-three years. He has a black wife and a family of black children. We did not see his wife, but he gave us a fine dinner, and we passed quite a pleasant day.

"Coming here we sailed by Cape Coast Castle,



where Governor McLean lived and where he is buried. He was well known on the coast, and our officers liked him very much. He was the husband of L. E. L., the poetess, and I can remember when he came to America in one of father's ships and visited us.

"We are going from here to Congo River, and I have great hopes that we shall capture one or two prizes; that will be some compensation for being on this station.

"What a happy time I had at home those last three months! I am constantly recalling it, and wishing those days could come back again."

"NOVEMBER 29, 1859.

"We are back at Fernando Po, which is the most civilized of any place we have visited yet. The old Spanish governor is very hospitable, and when we go ashore we spend the day at his home. We manage to have a tolerably pleasant time, and among the Spanish officers here are some fine fellows.

"Hammie and Frank must write often if they expect me to bring them home a parrot, for I am going to get some as soon as we go to the Congo. The other day we boarded a ship called the *Firefly*, and it was the same one father took me on board of years ago in Boston. She was suspected of being a slaver then, and *might* lie under the same suspicion now. If father was in business now and had some vessels here, I could attend to his affairs for him, and might even send him a whole cargo of negroes if he said so!"

"NOVEMBER 30, 1859.

"We started last night for a cruise in the Bight of Benin, and the coast looks much more interesting than I expected. The inhabitants though are miserable wretches, whose whole business is the slave trade."

“ DECEMBER 6, 1859.

“ The Captain and myself took breakfast this morning with King Té, a celebrated old negro on this part of the coast. The breakfast was served up in great style, for he is quite rich, having made a great deal of money in the slave-trade; it was all very novel, but I found it a little difficult to swallow some of the food.

“ Speaking of one feast reminds me of another. I forgot to tell you about the way we kept Thanksgiving. The Commodore fixed it on Nov. 6 for the fleet. On that day we were off Lagos, a noted slave station. It was very hot, and every single one of our surroundings was as different from anything in New England as it was possible for things to be. We had a big dinner, though, and did our best to celebrate. The King of the Dahomeys, which is a warlike tribe on the coast, supplies most of the slave-traders by selling them his prisoners of war. He is very angry about so many vessels being sent to stop the slave-trade.

“ During the past year this cruel king has been sacrificing a great many slaves on account of his father's death. He never sacrifices less than five a day, and sometimes he has killed as many as five hundred in one day! On hearing of the capture of the *Harris*, loaded with slaves, he was so angry that he had all those victims whom he sacrificed on that day dressed in European costume, and then hung them up in all sorts of ways, saying he would ‘ Let them know how he would treat *white* slaves.’ A few days ago an English commodore paid a visit to a tribe in the interior, and the chief entertained him by beheading fifty slaves in honor of his visit ! ”

December 10, 1859, George writes his younger brother that the *Sumter* has been cruising about without seeing a sail, and that “ When the ship is hove to we

make the time pass with a little shark fishing, which I think such a fisherman as you are would enjoy. Yesterday I harpooned a tremendous fellow, and we all had a great time getting him on board. There are so many sharks round the ship all the time that we have to be very careful not to fall overboard, for once in the water there would be no help for us.

“ If we catch a slaver perhaps I shall come home in charge of her, though the officers that have had charge of prizes taken out here tell awful stories of the passage to Monrovia with slaves on board. Even when there is no disease or sickness among the slaves, the smell that rises from the ship’s hole is so horrible that it makes and keeps one sick all the time. It is almost impossible to learn to endure it so as to perform duty. One officer, writing from Monrovia, says nothing would tempt him to take charge of another prize, and he was quite lucky, the slaves only dying at the rate of five a day ! ”

“ LAGOS, December 15, 1859.

“ We have just come in here to mail our letters. We hear that the King of Dahomey has finished his yearly sacrifices, and has killed slaves enough to float his canoe in their blood !

“ We have been out to the Elobey Island, where we were sent by the Commodore to survey the harbor and make a general report about things there. But there was nothing on or about these islands to make them of any use, either as a coal depot or for any other of our purposes, and we were glad to get away.

“ Captain Armstrong expects to be ordered to the *San Jacinto*, which is one of our largest side wheel steamers. He says he has got permission from the Commodore to take me with him. Our Captain stands quite high in the Commodore’s estimation, who is much

pleased with his report and with the condition of this ship, and he lets him do as he thinks best about things; this makes it pleasanter all round, though our first lieutenant has become disgusted with the coast and resigned.

“I must tell you that I let him have that overcoat which I brought from home. I hated to part with it, because whenever I put it on it wraps me up in so many pleasant associations, and calls up so many pleasant reminiscences, that I often have a good laugh thinking over the good times that the old coat puts me in mind of.

“Our cruising is likely to become terribly monotonous at this rate. It is very hot and unhealthy and we do not dare to go on shore; and in spite of precautions, we already have some cases of fever on board.”

Later on. George does venture on shore, and comes to grief by shaking hands with the King of the Boobes, by which he catches an eruption in the skin of his hands. This was the chief of a tribe, who occasionally came down from the mountains to get supplies, and George afterwards learns that they are never known to wash themselves. Indeed, his experience in Africa inclined him to endorse Darwin's evolution theories, except that he asserts the monkeys are rather superior to some negro tribes he saw.

The U. S. S. *Fulton*, which belonged to the squadron, sailed from the United States about the time of the *Sumter*, but was lost in a gale. The news had reached George by this time, and he writes home, in answer to inquiries, that “Coming over we encountered the same gale that she did, but as you see we were more fortunate.”

At some point a little north of St. Paul de Loanda he hears of the gorilla, a creature whose existence was hardly credited in 1859, and thus he writes of it :

“ They have lately discovered another species of the monkey race called the gorilla. It is a large and very hideous animal, walks erect on its hind legs, and the largest ones are about seven feet tall. One was killed the other day, and measured nine feet from the tips of his fingers across his outspread arms. They are very powerful and sometimes attack whole villages, and the natives are very much afraid of them. It is dangerous to attack them unless you are sure of your aim, for they are worse than a lion when they are wounded. I should like to see one, but in this part of the coast it is so unhealthy I cannot go on shore, so I spend all my spare time thinking of you at home and of all the pleasant times I had last summer.”

George did, however, succeed in seeing a gorilla and tried to capture one alive. A “gorilla boy” was at last procured through his efforts, and fastened up on shore in the most secure manner, but it escaped one night, for growing stronger all the time it was capable to break from any means of confinement they could use. George afterwards obtained some gorilla skeletons which he gave to Dr. Otis, who sent them home to the Massachusetts Natural History Society, and received their most cordial thanks for such a “rare addition to the museum.”

“ DECEMBER 29, 1859.

“ For the last week we have been on the track of an American slaver, which has been a little variety for us. We were in company with the English man-of-war *Cedusa*, and it being Xmas time we exchanged festivities and had dinner parties, excursions on shore, etc. We went to visit the different chiefs, and have ‘palavers’ about the slave-trade. It is a rich sight to see one of these old negro chiefs, with his wives and slaves; they have quite an idea how to live and are often very sharp,

and if one is not interested in the business part of the palaver he cannot help being in such a phase of human life, and in all the singularities of nature, both animal and vegetable, on a coast like this.

“We meet a good many slavers who carry on the traffic as ‘palm oil traders,’ and there are a great many vessels engaged in the slave-trade, so that I cannot help hoping we shall make a capture; but under the present system it is almost useless for us to try to do anything to stop the slave-trade; our cruisers cannot do much under our laws, and the English make the principal captures. Slaves are being constantly shipped, and the King of Dahomey is now on a slave hunt to supply some ships which he expects from the States. He is a cruel old rascal, and says if he cannot sell his slaves he will kill them for a sacrifice, and they will beg to go in a slaver rather than be in his hands. We heard terrible accounts of him while we were in the Bight of Benin.”

“JANUARY 18, 1860.

“Our cruising ground is now between the equator and St. Paul de Loanda. Captain Armstrong has gone to command the *San Jacinto*, but owing to resignations and a short supply of officers, I could not leave this ship to go with him. We now have Captain McDonough.

“You ask me ‘How I look?’ Well, I am just the same size as ever—just the same ‘little fellow’—and I have given up all hopes of growing any taller; but I think I look a good deal older, for this climate tells on a man. A great many break down completely when exposed to it. Five officers and several men have already been condemned by medical survey and sent home.

“All labor connected with the ships, that involves

going on shore, has to be done by negroes hired for the purpose as no white sailor could do it and live, the climate is so deadly."

"FERNANDO PO, February 12, 1860.

"Nearly all the squadron are here now, and the officers enjoy seeing each other very much. As for me, I feel as if I were having my last good time, for the Captain showed me his orders last night, and we are to cruise all the year on the wildest and most uncivilized parts of the coast; recruiting finally at Elephant's Bay, which is a miserable place, but has the merit of being healthy. We have no hope of Madeira or any *pleasant* change.

"Lieutenant Stewart is to be married when we go home, and I have just promised him to go to North Carolina and stand up with him. Just now he is writing a long letter to his sweetheart. He is so full of fun I do not know what we should do without him, and we have all lived on this ship very pleasantly together."

"FEBRUARY 13, 1860.

"The mail to-day brings us very exciting news, all about the Southern insurrection. I cannot take much stock in it, nor credit such an awful thing as any prospect of a dissolution of the Union.

"I see by the papers that General Peaslee is going to settle in Concord, and I should think you would be glad. A good many of the officers know him, and speak of him in the highest terms."

"FEBRUARY 18, 1860.

"We are all ordered to Kabenda, as news has been received that the negroes are going to rise on the white people there, murder them and burn the factories, and then run for the bush where no white man can follow them. So we expect a big row."

“ FEBRUARY 25, 1860.

“ When we arrived at Kabenda we found the natives at war with the Portuguese, whom they had whipped badly and driven back to St. Paul de Loanda, with quite a loss. The chiefs said they had nothing against the Americans and would not touch or interfere with them; so we did not land our forces but stood up for Majumba, in order to meet the mail steamer. When we did so, I received my long-looked-for and much-longed-for letter from home. . . .

“ Be sure and give the nicest messages you can think of to those lady friends of mine at home, who remember me and inquire for me; for as I have not seen a white woman for six months, I feel quite timid and self-distrustful, and am afraid any messages of my own composition would be sadly amiss. You will certainly tell them the exact truth if you give them my love and say that I have not spent a happy hour since I left Concord.

“ As I am caterer of the mess, I go on shore a good deal, and have a good chance to see all there is of African life. I have become acquainted with all the principal chiefs on the cruising ground, and find that the slave-trade is carried on to a great extent.

“ Within the last two weeks three or four cargoes have been taken from the mouth of the Congo, and one of the chiefs told me of some slavers being up that river. I gave the information to Captain McDonough, and we started up, but although we ascended far enough to find the navigation difficult, the slavers' draught was too light for us, and the Captain ordered the *Sumter* back, and we returned with only the empty honor of having gone farther up the Congo than any other man-of-war.

“ On our way down we stopped and ran up a creek



to visit a French slave factory. The French make a government affair of the trade and have several slave barracoons on the coast, and ship off large numbers. But the slaves shipped, according to the French conditions, are liberated after serving seven years, and if they choose can come back to this coast.

“These French people were very polite to us, showed us their barracoons and slave ships, and all the slaves that were there ready to be shipped. They amounted to several hundred, and were kept in good discipline by a few powerful negroes and a moderate allowance of whipping. We found the barracoons in excellent order, everything clean and well regulated, and the slaves went through a series of performances for our entertainment. They danced their native dances, and sung native songs, and had some of their native games, and it was peculiar and interesting, and we enjoyed it. Indeed, our stay there was an improvement on anything we have had on the coast so far.

“We came down the Congo and started for Loango, but finding we were short of coal went to St. Paul de Loanda, where we met several of our squadron. Our pleasant trip had rather a melancholy ending, for Captain McDonough is to be superseded in his command on account of the unsatisfactory state of his health.”

“MARCH 12, 1860.

“Why do you people at home not write to me? Do you not know how hard it is for me not to get letters from you? When an unusual length of time goes by and I do not hear from you, I get it into my head that you are forgetting me, and that I am losing my place among you.

“Tell Hammie and Frank that I have one of the best parrots now that ever was. He talks better this

minute than our little three-year-old niece! I have sent home a barrel of African coffee. Write me how you like it. Our officers drink it, and some say it has a flavor like Mocha, and like it very much.

“Tell Frank I will bring him all the coins I can pick up. The negroes use shells, called cowries, for money, and have no coinage of course.”

“APRIL 15, 1860.

“The clipper ship *Nightingale* has just gone ashore with two thousand negroes on board. If she gets them to Havana, they will bring, on an average, six hundred dollars apiece; so you can calculate how much money will be made on her. This *Nightingale* is a powerful clipper ship, and is the property of its captain, Bowen, who is called the Prince of Slavers. The first time I was up the Congo the *Sumter* went up fifteen miles after a slaver under his command, called the *Sultana*. I had information that slaves were fitting out up the river, and told the captain, and he took the *Sumter* up. We found the barque *Sultana* and the brig *Kibby* with their slave decks all laid and everything perfectly ready for that cargo. You ought to get some of the books on slavery and read a description of the fitting up of a slave ship. When I get home I will tell you all about it.

“We took both the ships and detained one of them three days, and then, after all, our captain let her go, declaring, against every proof, that there was nothing in the ships but what was in her manifest. Of course these ships at once filled up with slaves and escaped,—calmly sailed off; there was no ‘escape’ about it—and with the money Bowen made from the sale of those slaves he has purchased this *Nightingale*, one of the fastest clipper ships known. When I saw Bowen in command of the *Sultana* he was living very luxuriously; everything in his cabin in the finest style, and

everything about his career as nearly as possible like those romantic pirates, slave captains, etc., who are introduced into novels."

When my brother was in New Orleans in 1864 he met and talked with the former captain of the slave brig *Kibby*, which the *Sumter* had overhauled at the same time with the *Sultana*, and from her he learned that the *Nightingale* was afterwards captured one night off the coast of Africa, but that Bowen made his escape and was soon the captain of another slaver and at his old trade again. He was afterwards taken by the English, but escaped a second time, and there being no longer any profitable market for slaves, he went to keeping a hotel in Aspinwall, and was living and flourishing at the time of this conversation.

"Our vessels cruise very little now after slavers. The captains think it useless under existing laws. A few days ago we overhauled a barque all ready to take her negroes on board, but after detaining her two days our captain decided there was nothing on board that was not on her manifest, and so let her go. We lost a fine prize and I lost a chance to get home, and I have given up all hopes now of taking any prizes."

"APRIL 18, 1860.

"I have just heard that the barque we overhauled took a cargo of negroes on board that very week and escaped! Until our laws are different at home we shall not dare to take many prizes out here.

"Lieutenant Stewart interrupts my writing and says, 'Come, Perkins, let's go somewhere;' and I think I will stop writing for a while and accept his invitation.

"Well, we went on shore, took a machala—a sort of hammock in which the negroes carry people about—and went out to the well. It would seem odd to a New

England person to make a special visit to a well, but they are rare things in this country, and it is the only place to go to outside of St. Paul de Loanda.

“One other variety we have in our life here, which is to go ashore and visit some negro king, who will receive us under a palm-tree with his wives and slaves about him; but I generally find them all too disgusting to be very amusing. Since McDonough left us Captain Rooney has been our commander, and, like so many officers on this coast, he begins to show signs of breaking down. I really think he will not live but a short time longer.”

“APRIL 22, 1860.

“The last accounts from home of the progress of the rebellion are very exciting. A good many Southern officers on this station have resigned, and a good deal of feeling exists. It certainly begins to look as though civil war was a sure thing for us, and the news of it has already affected our position with foreigners. The English officers are no longer polite when we meet them, and do not show a friendly feeling. I really think they are highly delighted at our political misfortunes, and, indeed, at any of our troubles. It provokes me.”

“OFF MAJUMBA, April 26, 1860.

“It is Sunday evening, and everything is very quiet on board ship, for poor Captain Rooney is very sick, and there is but little hope of his recovery. We all pity him very much, but I do not think he cares to live, for he has had a great deal of trouble. The other day he received a letter from the woman who was once his wife, but who has deserted him. It was an old letter that had been following him all about for some time, and he was terribly excited at receiving it; since then he has grown rapidly worse.

“Even little Jack Stewart is quiet and downhearted, not only on account of poor Rooney, but because his sweetheart has stopped writing him. He says this is the ninth time his faithful heart has been shattered by Cupid’s arrows !

“We cruise in sight of land most of the time now, and I do not have much navigation to do, for I am very familiar now with the principal headlands, and I spend my spare time reading home letters over and over.”

“APRIL 28, 1860.

“I cannot write but little or do much of anything to-day, for I was up all night with the Captain, and I am very tired. He has my room, as it is the coolest one on board ship. I can hear him talking and muttering now in a feverish way, and every now and then he breaks out and raves in a wild delirium. It is dreadful ! The doctor says that if there is no change for the better very soon, he cannot possibly live. I wish he could get better, for sickness and death on board ship are very sad.”

“APRIL 29, 1860.

“It is all over now, and everything is very hushed and still. The officers say but few words, in a low tone, and the boys speak in whispers, but they need not be afraid, they cannot wake poor Rooney ; his sleep now is the sleep of death. He died a few hours ago in a delirious state, not becoming conscious even at the last, and unable to leave one parting word.

“The weather adds to our gloom and helps to remind us that we are in the presence of an awful power. It is a fearfully dark night, and the rain comes down in torrents, with sharp lightning, and heavy thunder in long, rolling peals.”

“KABENDA, May 1, 1860.

“We brought Captain Rooney’s remains here, and buried him with military and Masonic honors. We had his grave dug under a large tree on shore, and the spot is pleasant, but all about is very wild and the inhabitants on this part of the coast are almost in a savage state, but they say, ‘We like the Americans, and we will not touch the dead man.’ Our machinery is out of order, and we shall have to remain here several days.

“I received letters from you all by the last mail, and it did me more good than anything else in the world. I am afraid I shall not be able to get Hammie a bird-of-paradise, or a mocking-bird either, for I cannot find out that they exist on this coast, and I have made a good many inquiries. I ought to find out if any one can, for I *trade* in birds a good deal and keep a collection on board ship in my room and about the rigging. I have some splendid parrots, and I think they are very bright birds,—some of them know so much it almost scares me. It seems as if they must be human. There is one I mean to keep and bring home if I can; I call him ‘Bosen,’ for he is the only one that can exactly imitate the boatswain’s whistle.\* I find, to my sorrow, that many of the beautiful little birds I get here will not live long on board ship, and I think I shall have to give up birds and take to monkeys. I have a beautiful little blue-nosed monkey who is very intelligent, but is always in mischief. He has a special spite against little Jack Stewart, and takes every opportunity to plague him. No sooner does poor Stewart seat himself under the skylight for a good, comfortable read than this little scamp watches his chance, and then with one spring

\* He did bring him home, and he lived a long time and was a wonderful bird. He was stuffed after his death.

lights exactly on the bald spot in the middle of Stewart's head! Poor Stewart jumps up in an awful rage, swearing he will 'kill that monkey,' who, by this time, is sitting in the rigging out of his reach and chattering and laughing at him. If Stewart were not so kind-hearted he would carry out his threat, but he cannot keep mad long enough. Sometimes this monkey will deliberately plan some bit of foolery or mischief long beforehand, and then wait till we are all looking at him to carry it out, and then, quick as a flash, will do some ludicrous thing that is also generally destructive; but it will make us burst out laughing, and then he clears up the rigging like a streak of lightning."

"MAY 8, 1860.

"The doctor and I have been on an excursion into the interior to a place five miles from Point Pedras. The natives there are very savage and treacherous, so that white men do not venture among them. But with us ignorance was bliss; we did not know this about them, and we started on our trip with no arms, but five bottles of gin and two Kroomen to carry them. We went to a large village, and soon after our arrival saw how matters were, and we really feared for our lives, for the inhabitants were not at all civil. We succeeded at last in persuading the old king to take enough of our gin to make him good-natured, and to say he was 'our friend.' Then his subjects did not dare to act without his orders, and we finally retired in safety. But we felt *safer* when we were back on board ship, and we have decided not to make any more such expeditions at present."

"MAY 27, 1860.

"We are now anchored off shore between Point Pedras and Majumba. At four o'clock to-morrow morn-

ing we shall get under way, and some time to-morrow we shall arrive at Point Pedras. When we arrive we shall fire a gun, which is the prevailing signal on this coast for notifying the natives that we wish to trade. A few hours after this signal the coast will be lined with negroes loaded with all their produce, which consists of goats, chickens, eggs, pigs, etc., with a few mats and baskets. After the beach is well covered with natives, we have our boat manned by the Kroomen. These are huge black fellows that ship on this station for boat duty, and the going ashore work that our men cannot perform in this climate. They come from the Kroo country in Upper Guinea, just south of Liberia. When they ship, the officers usually christen them by some queer name,—the more ridiculous the better,—and the Kroo-man answers to this all through the service. A special favorite of mine is called ‘Upside Down;’ then there is another named ‘Frying Pan,’ and a particularly black and big one is named after a delicate Annapolis belle. They seem to be almost amphibious, and it is astonishing to see them in the water.

“At this season of the year the surf runs very high and it is dangerous to land; at any rate, we rarely escaped a ducking. But to go on with my story about going ashore to trade.

“When the boat is ready and manned by the Kroomen, all the old bottles, old cans, ship knives, cotton handkerchiefs, old clothes, and several bottles of liquors are passed into it, and then such of the officers as wish to go take their places. After their first few trips to the shore, though, to satisfy their curiosity when they first come out, most of the officers give up going as they do not like the surf.

“Your affectionate brother, however, always goes; anything for variety, and there is a good deal of excite-



ment about this. The Kroomen begin to row and strike up a song to pull by, and after rowing four or five miles we arrive on the edge of the surf. Then they lie on their oars and all eyes are turned leeward, looking for a big roller which will carry us on shore. These moments of watching are very exciting, and you hold your breath in spite of yourself. The roller looks like a great live monster, and you do not feel at all sure how he will treat you. At length when the looked-for wave comes, the Kroomen give way with a shout, the natives on shore yell with all their might, the boat shoots forward on the top of the breaker at the rate of twenty knots an hour, the surf thunders like the roar of a battery, and altogether it seems as if the world had come to an end, and all those fellows in the infernal regions were let loose.

“Now we must trust wholly to luck. There is no retreat and no help, for no human strength or power can control the boat, and go on shore you must, either in the boat or under it. After the few wild moments of this rapid transit, the boat strikes the beach, the Kroomen jump overboard, supposing they are not there already, and you jump on the back of one of them, who runs up the beach with you, out of the way of the next roller, which immediately follows the one which brought you in, and which breaks over the boat, often upsetting it if it is still upright, and always wetting everything inside. When the Krooman lands you from his back high up on the dry beach, if you have escaped a good thorough soaking, and are not half drowned in fact, you are a lucky fellow.”

“JUNE 17, 1860.

“I began this letter three weeks ago, and while writing the above description, little thought how soon I

should be able to give you from actual experience a most literal account of all and every danger connected with landing through the surf on this coast.

“As I said before, at this season of the year, the rollers are very heavy, and the risk is really very great. But a short time ago, the ship being off the Settee river, I thought it would be a good idea to try and discover the river’s mouth. So I volunteered to take a boat’s crew and attempt it, but I had no idea of trying to land, for that I knew would be foolhardy. We pulled in, till about half a mile from shore, and then rowed along the coast. But while examining the shore for the river’s outlet, a roller which had started far off at sea caught our boat and capsized it. Of course we were obliged to swim for shore, though, in truth, we had little to do with it, for the moment the boat was upset we were driven into the surf. Not one of us thought we should ever reach the shore; for if we were not drowned the sharks would eat us up. As I rose on the top of a wave, I looked ahead and saw nothing but a wild stretch of wild-tossing surf, it seemed perfectly impossible for any one to live in it; but when I looked back I could count all my men striking out for the shore, and this was very encouraging, for I was afraid one or two might be under the boat. I thought for a moment of you all at home, and wondered if mother would not feel a little frightened if she knew where her oldest son was at that moment, and it occurred to me how small the chances were that I should ever receive my next letters from you, for our ship was then on its way for the mail. At that moment a roller struck me and carried me down so deep that I was caught by the undertow and kept down a long time, all the while being carried towards the sea. When I came up again I tried to look out for the next roller, but it was no use, the first one half drowned me.

and the next kept me down so long that when I rose I was still right in the worst of the surf, which was tumbling and tossing me about in a manner which by no means met my highest approbation. My eyes, nose, and mouth were full of sand, and I certainly thought my time had come.

“Just then I looked on shore and saw two of my men dragging another one from the water, and at that I struck out with one despairing kick, which brought me where two of the men took hold of me. But that was all I knew of the affair. My next sensation was that of a person being well shaken about, and then my consciousness gradually returned, and I heard one of the men say, ‘Cheer up, Mr. Perkins, your boat and all the men are on shore!’ This was such good news that I did not mind much the uncomfortable position in which I found myself. I was covered with sand and stretched across a log about two feet high, my head on one side and my feet on the other, and the men were doing all they could to bring me to. It was now a little after sunset, and in looking about we found we were wrecked on a sand-spit.”

“JUNE 24, 1860.

“While writing this letter a week ago, I was taken sick with the African fever, and this is the first time I have attempted to sit up. But everything looks so pleasant this morning I thought I would try to write you a few lines. The doctor says I am still weak and must not sit up long. I shall be well though pretty soon.

“I want to finish writing you about our shipwreck. After getting ashore and coming to my senses, I found three of my men half drowned, and another one injured. We managed to get the boat up into the river, but now having gone a whole day without food, we began

to feel very weak and faint and to suffer awfully from thirst. The next morning we lost our way, and after pulling round till about two o'clock in the afternoon, we stumbled on some natives fishing. We followed them to their village, but they were such a miserable, bad-looking set of negroes that we were afraid of trouble. Knowing that the native villages were left in charge of the old men in the daytime, while the young and strong are off hunting and fishing, we did not know what might happen to us when these came back at night. So after killing some chickens and making a very good meal with these and some sweet potatoes, the strongest of us—which were myself and three others—made ourselves ready for a fight; the rest manned the boat for our retreat. A short time after this the chief came home and about a hundred men with him.

“ I am getting tired, and you will be tired of reading such a long yarn, so I will cut it short. I told the chief that I had come to pay him a visit and we had a great palaver; but he would not give us anything to eat, and we made up our minds that we did not dare to stay long in his neighborhood. So we moved down on a sand-spit in sight of our ship, and there we stayed three days and three nights waiting for the surf to go down so that we could return to her. For the same reason she could not send to our aid.

“ We made a sort of tent and built a fortification, traded almost all our clothes off for something to eat, and slept unpleasantly near about five hundred yelling and howling savages. It was a pretty hard, disagreeable time, and all the while the ship was in sight, but could render us no assistance. We learned afterwards that they floated off casks of provisions in hopes the tide would bring them in, but they never reached us. In

time, though, some Kroomen got on shore from the ship and brought us some oars, and after trying all one day, we managed, just at night, to get off, and through the surf, and back to the ship.

“It was a happy time for us, and it seemed so for all hands, for every one on board had been very anxious about us. Not far north of this place, if you happen to get cast ashore, the natives kill and eat you at once, for cannibalism is by no means extinct among many of the negro tribes. As it was the Kroomen were *sure* we should all be drowned. The men that were with me have all been down with the fever, and I am the last case. The doctor has just come in and says I must go to bed, so good-night.”

“JUNE 27, 1860.

“Thank you all for the letters which I received by the last mail. I see that Uncle John is keeping his promise—that there should be a new face in his family for me to see every time I came back from a cruise! Give my love and congratulations to him and to Aunt Anne.

“Half our men are now down with the fever, and we need to go somewhere to recruit. I hope the Commodore will order us to St. Helena. I have sent some mats home by a merchant ship. Write me if you like them and I will get some more.”

Everything that it was possible to get on this savage coast, George tried to send home. These mats, made of long grasses, were very curious and pretty and rare, and he sent many things that were interesting, considering the savage human nature they represented.

“JUNE 30, 1860.

“By the last mail I heard from a young lady whom I met up the Mediterranean. She had seen Mr. Sid-

ney Webster and had talked with him about me; and he had spoken very highly of me to her. This was very kind of him, and he has always been kind and polite to me.\*

“The fever left me at last, but it has taken away all my strength. I *must* be well, though, by the 4th of July, for the *Mystic* is in and we are going to celebrate by a big dinner.

\*                    \*                    \*                    \*                    \*

“Sometimes it seems to me as if my letters home must be cold and could not half express my feelings for you—so that you could not have any idea how I do love and think of you all the time. Indeed, I do not believe any words I might use could tell you this, but I hope you know and feel it just the same.”

“JUNE 27, 1860.

“DEAR SUE:

“I have sent home by the *Marion* a box of things that I ordered from Madeira where they were chosen for you by a young lady who has excellent taste.†

“We are now off the Bonney River. I begin to feel pretty well tired and worn out. The station is too monotonous and unhealthy, and we ought to be sent to some place to recruit. There is a good deal of sickness on board, and our old sergeant is at the point of death.

\* Sidney Webster had been law partner of George's uncle, John H. George of Concord, and had often been at our house when George was a boy. He was afterward Private Secretary of President Pierce, and married a daughter of Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State. He is now a lawyer in New York.

† This consisted of lovely specimens of the delicate and beautiful Madeira work and embroidery, much rarer then than now. Besides boxes of fine mosaic, chains of hair-work, feather flowers, a shawl, knit by hand, of the finest thread, and yards of beautiful hand made trimming. I shall never forget how delighted I was to receive this box, nor what a wonderful brother George seemed to me!

I am feeling very badly about him, for he is a gallant old fellow and was with me on my first cruise; and you never forget those with whom you make your first cruise."

"AUGUST 27, 1860.

"Since I wrote you last I have visited two of the wildest kind of places. One was on the Bonney River, which I ascended twenty-five miles, in an open boat, crossing one of the most dangerous bars on the coast. I went to carry the mails to the English mail steamer, and once at the station I had to remain three days on account of the high surf, and at last had to come out on the English steamer. One of the palm-oil traders gave a big supper in honor of my arrival up the river, and said I was the 'first American naval officer that had ever been in Bonney.' The officers of the mail steamer told me that they never heard of such a boat as mine crossing the bar, and that it was a great wonder that I arrived safely. The natives on the Bonney River are cannibals, and if I had been upset on the bar, they would have killed and eaten me.

"The shark is a fetich among the negroes on this river, who feed them till they grow very large and become very fierce. Every year they sacrifice to this horrible fetich an innocent child, brought up expressly to be eaten by sharks. This child is generally about ten years old, and must be sound and healthy and perfect in every respect. The slightest scratch will make her unfit for the sacrifice. On the appointed day this child is placed on some planks across a canoe, and taken out on the river. They do not let her know her horrible fate, but all at once they tip the plank, and she is seized and devoured the moment she touches the water by the monster hovering about the boat.

"As I was gone so long they all thought on board

ship that I was lost, and I got a warm welcome when I came back safe and sound.

“ We started South directly after my return and anchored in Camma Bay, up the Fernan Vas River. Captain Laurens, an American merchant there, sent for some of our officers to come on shore and have a palaver with the natives. So Stewart and myself, and some others of us, accepted the invitation, and found when we went ashore that a large number of natives with their chiefs were collected together to receive us. As Captain Laurens was anxious to impress them with the dignity of the officers of his government, I persuaded Stewart to go in full uniform, cocked hat and all. The rest of us followed and attended him with the utmost ceremony, and gave the natives to understand that his person was sacred. He made them a fine-sounding address, which was interpreted to them, setting forth the power and glory of the United States, which, however, was willing and even desirous to be on good terms with such famous chiefs, and would protect and befriend them if they would never harm the Americans, especially Captain Laurens.

“ They made a suitable reply, and the palaver being done, they set themselves to preparing a feast. They slaughtered an ox in the first place, which was to be cooked and eaten whole, and began to prepare other equally delicate dishes. But night was now coming on, and in this climate one learns the truth of the poet’s line,—

‘ At one stride comes the dark,’

and I began to be anxious. Some of the savages had never seen a white man, and they would slink up to us, touch our white skins slyly and quickly, look at us for a moment, with their fierce, wild eyes, and then run away. So I collected my party and hurried them off.



I had bought some wild dogs and a red-headed monkey, which I tied in the boat, and then we got in and shoved off. But in spite of everything, the boat was capsized just as it rose on the last wave of the surf, and we had to swim for it. At length, though, the boat was righted and we were all picked up and reached the ship in safety. But after all was over, I nearly died with laughing when I thought of it, and so would you if you could have seen it all. Of course the moment the boat upset I struck out for the shore, which is all one can do. As soon as I was able to look back and see where all the rest were, there was poor little Stewart, who had wholly abandoned himself to the rollers. He was bobbing up and down between the wild dogs and the monkey. First, his cocked hat would rise on a wave, and then his little boots would come uppermost, or *vice versa*, and all there were sputtering and howling and yelling and unable to do anything else, but we soon rescued them, and now we are all safe on shipboard, and can afford to laugh at the picture they made.

“The ducking did not seem to agree with the animals as well as with the human beings, for my wild dogs have died, and as my monkey seemed to droop and grow sickly I have sent him ashore, so Hammie and Frank have lost their present this time.

“I keep pretty busy every day, and manage to fill in almost every moment. I have a regular watch, four hours in the day and four hours at night, and besides my duties as master and navigator, I am caterer of the mess.

“The Captain has received letters, and we are to have five weeks to recruit, and are going to St. Helena. We shall be busy now getting ready for it. The *Relief* has come in, having on board my old friend, Dr. Page, who was with me on the *Release*. He is going to be mar-

ried when the squadron gets home, and wants me to come to Virginia and be his groomsman."

In a letter of this date, to his younger brother, he says: "I am very glad you had such a pleasant trip to the mountains, and came home in such good health, and that you are such good boys every way. I think we all ought to do well after the good teaching and good home influences we have always had. I bought two fine parrots at Kabenda, and if you would like one, I will send it to you. I keep all sorts of birds, and they are beauties, but most of these birds would not live in our climate. I have two little love-birds, and they are the most cunning little birds you ever saw. I have a 'widow' bird, too, and I wish you could see the beautiful plumage for which this bird is noted; but it would not live to get home."

"SHARK'S POINT, CONGO RIVER, March 27, 1861.

"We do not know what to think about the dreadful news from home. We take the New York *Herald*, but it reaches us very irregularly now, and we do not know what to believe. I cannot think our grand republic is going to pieces! Three of the Southern officers in our squadron have resigned, and those others who are from the South threaten to do the same."

About this time the *Sumter* went to St. Helena, but did not make a long stay. The letters George wrote from there are lost, but I remember he enjoyed hospitalities from the English residents and the United States consul, and was able for the only time during this cruise to indulge in his favorite amusement,—horseback riding. He sent home a book of views of the interesting spots on the island, and a wreath of "immortelles" from Napoleon's tomb. The date of his next letter is

“ MAY 1, 1861.

“ I am sorry you did not get my letters from St. Helena, for on this coast we hardly can get a subject like that to write about. The news which the last mail brings us confirms, without any hope of contradiction, the fact that there exists a dreadful rebellion in our beloved country. It has thrown the squadron into a great state of excitement. For some time past the foreigners on this coast have treated us with very little respect, and it has been plain to see that they thought us a broken power. I can tell you this has been a very provoking circumstance to loyal officers. I certainly cannot bring myself to believe but that it will be a long time yet before any government will have a right to despise the United States.

“ Is there a great deal of financial trouble at home? We cannot get any money out here, and we suppose the Department at Washington must be in great confusion. This news about our country is so absorbing we cannot think or talk of anything else. It was the 20th of June before we heard that Virginia had seceded. No doubt many officers of our squadron will resign; but, as a Northern man I, for one, hope that all the North will pull together and *go in and win*. One of the officers on this ship is from a Western state, received his appointment there, and draws his pay from our government; but he married a wife from Virginia, and for that reason is going to join the Southern navy.

“ I think there is more excuse for a man born and brought up at the South and holding property there, and it needs a *good* excuse for any man to serve against his own government, when it has fed and clothed him and he has sworn to defend it, and when he has no better reason for disloyalty than his desire to perpetuate slavery.

“I do not say much, but I feel and know that if I had the power I would *act*, and I think the North has been patient long enough. I am thankful to see by the papers that at last it is becoming pretty much of one mind throughout the North as to the course to be pursued with regard to the rebellion,—that it must be put down, and the Union must be saved.

“We did not get our orders, as we expected, by the last mail, and we have been cruising again after leaving St. Paul de Loanda. We went to Camma Bay, which is, as I said before, about twenty miles up the Fernan Vas River. Captain Laurens’s factory is about three miles above the bay. He is an American merchant, and he wanted one of the ships of the squadron to visit him. The day we arrived the surf was so high it was impossible to land, but the next day it looked a little smoother and the captain, doctor, and myself thought we would try it. We should not have been able to make a landing with any of our ship’s boats, but we went in a large canoe rowed by twelve negroes, which took us over the rollers very well.

“Captain Laurens is from Brooklyn, N. Y. He is about fifty years old and has lived thirty years on this coast, and has an immense number of negroes, who take care of the island and factory. He got up a great palaver for us, inviting a large number of negro chiefs, with their trains of wives and slaves, to come and visit the ‘Great men from America.’ These chiefs are dressed in all sorts of costumes.

“The surf was so high that we could not get back to the ship for two days, and I amused myself by taking a lot of negroes and going to hunt hippopotami. We started up a big drove, who rushed into the water, making a terrific noise. I shot and killed five, and I have saved their tusks to bring home. I was afraid of

only wounding some, as that enrages them and makes them dangerous, and they will rush upon a boat and attack it with such fury that it is hard to escape ; but I killed mine at the first fire, as we got pretty near. One did make for the boat, but by good rowing the negroes pulled away in season.

“Tell Uncle John there is a young rhinoceros here which I can easily get and send to him for a family pet, if he would like me to.

“I forgot to tell you that our first commander, Captain Armstrong, has been back on this ship for some time, and will remain in command till she goes home. He takes me out fishing with him a good deal, but fishing here is not much like the hard, exciting work we have when we go home. We take some of the men along with us and use a seine, which they set and then haul in as it fills with fish, so you see it is rather lazy work.

“I get a great deal of reading matter from the Captain. His wife is very literary, and the books she sends him are all ‘*first chop*.’ There are some novels by an author named Trollope that I like very much.”\*

“JUNE 5, 1861.

“We are now in the Gaboon River, where the head of our missionary settlement is established. The place belongs to the French. There are two American missionaries here with their families, and there are three or four English factories. Thirty miles farther up the river the natives are cannibals.”

Under date of June 17, 1861, George writes with great satisfaction that the *Sumter* has at last captured

\*In the twenty-six years that have passed since this was written how well known has become the “author named Trollope” wherever an English book is read!

a slaver. It is the brig *Falmouth*, and George has the promise of bringing her home. But Captain Armstrong, who had become much attached to him, wished him to remain and act as first lieutenant until the end of the cruise, which must now be near. As George was only twenty-four years old, this seems a high position to him, and he writes :

“Do n’t you think I have a right to feel highly flattered to be acting first lieutenant at my age? This offer, and the persuasions of the Captain, have induced me to give up my right to come home, though I hate to see the brig sail off and not go in her. It is some consolation, though, to have taken a slaver at all, for we never expected to get such a chance after we found how the laws worked.”

“JUNE 15, 1861.

“My old captain on the *Release*, Captain Parker, has sent me a file of papers by the last mail. I thought it was very kind of him to remember me. The mail brought me no letters from you, and I suppose you do not write because you think I am on my way home. But there is some unaccountable delay about our orders. It is high time they came. They were published long ago, and we saw them in a paper.\*

“As I have been both navigator and caterer of the mess, I have been making some calculations, and find that since we left New York we have run over fifty thousand miles, and that five of us have eaten three thousand chickens !

“I do not expect now that when I get back to the United States I can stay at home but a little while, and I ought not to care for rest and pleasure when such a

\* The delay in recalling foreign squadrons at this time was owing to rebel influence.

war is going on, even if the government gave me the time.

“This old *Sumter* is pretty well used up, and they have not thought her fast enough to chase slavers; but now I am first lieutenant of her, her power of speed will be thoroughly tested on her journey home you may be sure.”

This did not prove an idle assertion, and the newspapers of the day spoke of the return voyage of the *Sumter* as the quickest ever made between Africa and the United States.

George's last letters from Africa were full of sincere expressions of loyalty to his country and ardor in her cause, proving that his oaths to his government had a meaning to him, which his heart, brains, and high sense of honor enabled him to grasp and taught him to keep.

After returning to the United States and being detached from the *Sumter*, George was fortunately left at home for a little time before being ordered away. His health had suffered much from the African climate, and he greatly needed change and care, but still he was impatient for active service. His natural zeal for the performance of his duty was not lessened by his bodily weakness, and all his thoughts and plans now turned upon his opportunities to serve his country.

I give below portions of one of the letters of welcome he received at this time, which well expresses the feelings so many were called upon to experience in the time of the Civil War:

“Thank God, dear Perkins, you have at last got back to this unhappy and distracted country! Tell me if you are to be in New York at any time, and I will come on and shake hands with you and spend a day

there. If you are to be in Concord, come back by the way of Boston.

“Father is gone to St. Louis to join Fremont. You know father was born and appointed in Carolina, and is one of the few loyal Southern officers. His father and all his relations are there, and we have not heard from them since Sumter fell. How horrid this must all seem to you! But we have grown almost used to anything. I have not written to you for a long time, for all your squadron have been supposed to be coming home for the last four months.”

December 11, 1861, George was ordered to the United States steam gunboat *Cayuga* as first lieutenant. It was a new gunboat and fitted out in New York. Needless to say George obeyed his orders without any delay, and after going, writes home with his old frequency. In his first letter he says:

“I am very busy. None of the officers, except the Captain, have ever been to sea before in a man-of-war; and besides the officers, there are ninety-five green hands among the crew to be broken in and got into some kind of discipline. So my berth as first lieutenant is as onerous as honorary.

“The *Cayuga* is not very well fitted up for comfort, though she is a fine gunboat. We are ordered to join the Western Gulf blockading squadron, stop at Key West for coal, and then report to Commodore Farragut at Ship Island. It is evident we are going against New Orleans; and when we sail I shall say; Good-by to the land till I *land* on Southern soil, or in the bottom of the ocean.

“I send you home some photographs which I have just had taken. Every one here thinks they are very good, and they will prove to you that I always look very sober and solemn when I am not with you all.”



It was the wear and tear of more than two years in Africa which the truthful sun revealed in these pictures, and which caused us great anxiety for his health.

“KEY WEST, March 2, 1862.

“We arrived here yesterday after a very hard passage from New York. The first night we left we had a gale from the northwest, and it was very cold. The men knew very little about a man-of-war, and it was hard for them; there was really great suffering among us from freezing. Two of our yards were carried away. Another gale followed this, and there was just a series of them, more or less severe, all the way here. The engines and all were so strained that we broke down twice, and we were on our last legs when we got in.

“If I do my very best, I cannot get this ship in order possibly before next week, though the Commodore is in a great hurry to get us off, and the attack on New Orleans will be made as soon as possible.”

“SHIP ISLAND, March 31, 1862.

“General Butler is embarking his troops, and we all leave this evening for New Orleans. Everything is all excitement. The attack will be made at once, and they say if we succeed it will end the war.

“I always told you everything would be settled as soon as I went into action, and now I expect it will! It seems very strange to be down here surrounded by rebels. This morning one of our gunboats had a skirmish with one of theirs. It was in plain sight of our fleet.

“The *Cayuga* took a prize coming here from Key West, which we have sent back to New York.

“Every one is writing home. I expect my next letter, if I write at all, will be dated from New Orleans.”

“U. S. S. CAYUGA,  
“OFF ATCHAFALAYA, LOUISIANA,  
“April 4, 1862.

“Since I wrote you last we have had quite an exciting time. The next day after leaving Ship Island we arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi. There we met the Commodore and the rest of the fleet. A number of his vessels had bad luck and got ashore. The Commodore felt sure of being able to take New Orleans, and was getting ready for the attack; but a good many of the longest-headed officers thought it would be doubtful about his success. The ports are well garrisoned, and they have a fleet of gunboats and some iron-clads. Beauregard is there and the city is under martial law. Owing to the damage done our fleet by so many vessels being on shore, the Commodore has been obliged to delay the attack, and the *Cayuga* has been ordered off this place to blockade.

“We spoke the *Connecticut* just outside, and I received letters from you all,—letters which I have read over many times.

“This morning a gunboat, two steamers loaded with troops and guns, and a schooner with one gun sailed over the reef and came towards us. We cleared ship for action, and, when they arrived in full sight, hoisted our colors. They hoisted theirs and stood for us, and we expected a hard fight, but before they arrived within reach of our guns, we thought we would fire them off, as they had been loaded several days, and then load them fresh for the expected fight. So we took aim, blazed away, and started for them. But as soon as we did this, they just fired a couple of shot at us, and turned tail and ran! We chased them into shallow water, but we had to give it up, as the *Cayuga* draws ten feet, and we nearly grounded.

“We are anchored off the channel, because we draw too much to cross the bar and get into the harbor, and we keep all ready for a fight at any time. We expect the rebels will be out again to-morrow, perhaps to-night, and we shall sleep with our boots on and all our arms ready. I think Captain Harrison has the right kind of pluck, and I get on with him very well, which, they say, is an uncommon thing for a captain and first lieutenant.

“Anyway I hope the *Cayuga* will go down before she ever gives up, and I guess she will.

“We return to-morrow afternoon to the Mississippi to get ready for the fight at New Orleans. It must certainly come off next week. If the Commodore had not been unlucky about the ships—several getting aground—it would all have been over by this time.

“In spite of there being so much going on as to keep up a constant excitement, and my being so busy, I am *always* thinking of you all at home. Give my love to Aunt Anne and tell her I opened her pickles to-day, and they were a great treat.

“The weather is very warm here, but we are all in good health, and ready for anything that turns up. If those vessels had not come out, I was going in with a boat to take a look around, but I had to give it up, and probably it is lucky I did. I have not the least idea when I shall be able to send this letter; but while I feel well and hopeful about the future, I will make a request, which I might as well make now, as at any time, and then the subject need not be brought up again.

“If anything should happen to me, so that I should not get home alive, I should like my remains, if they can be found, to be taken home and buried with the rest of the family; but if they cannot be found, I should like my place in our burial lot left vacant, and a

small monument erected on that spot for me. I am not going to think or speak of this subject again, but the happiest of men must do so some time."

"U. S. S. CAYUGA,  
"STORMING THE FORTS UP THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER,  
"April 20, 1862.

"The bombardment of the forts commenced three days ago, and the first day we were in close action ; but we all came out safe. The enemy's cannon-balls drop about us constantly. Several of the vessels in the fleet have been struck and a few men killed and wounded. To-day or to-morrow we start up the river. The chain across it was cut last night, and I have no doubt but that the forts will be ours before to-morrow evening.

"I have but a moment to write. The rebels are continually sending down firerafts, and the bombardment from the mortars goes on night and day, so that we have hardly any sleep. I will write as soon as we reach New Orleans, and I hope you are not worrying, for by the time you get this everything will be over.

"Unless we meet some unforeseen obstacle, New Orleans must fall, though perhaps it will take a week's hard fighting. We have just heard that Captain Bailey has taken the *Cayuga* for his flagship, so we shall lead the gunboats."

"NEW ORLEANS, April 27, 1862.

"We arrived here two days ago, after what was 'the most desperate fight and greatest naval achievement on record,' so every one says. Wednesday-night, April 23, we were ordered to lead the way, and be ready to run by the forts at two o'clock in the morning ; and at two o'clock precisely the signal was made from the *Hartford* to 'get under way.'

"Captain Harrison paid me the compliment of letting

me pilot the vessel, and though it was a starlight night we were not discovered until we were well under the forts; then they opened a tremendous fire on us. I was very anxious, for the steering of the vessel being under my charge gave me really the whole management of her. The *Cayuga* received the first fire, and the air was filled with shells and explosions which almost blinded me as I stood on the fore-castle trying to see my way, for I had never been up the river before. I soon saw that the guns of the forts were all aimed for the mid-stream, so I steered close under the walls of Fort St. Philip, and although our masts and rigging got badly shot through, our hull was but little damaged.

“After passing the last battery and thinking we were clear, I looked back for some of our vessels, and my heart jumped up into my mouth, when I found I could not see a *single one*. I thought they all must have been sunk by the forts. Then looking ahead I saw eleven of the enemy’s gunboats coming down upon us, and it seemed as if we were ‘*gone*’ sure. Three of these made a dash to board us, but a heavy charge from our eleven-inch gun settled the *Gov. Moore*, which was one of them. A ram, the *Manassas*, in attempting to butt us, just missed our stern, and we soon settled the third fellow’s ‘hash.’ Just then some of our gunboats, which had passed the forts, came up, and then all sorts of things happened. There was the wildest excitement all round. The *Varuna* fired a broadside into *us*, instead of the enemy. Another of our gunboats attacked one of the *Cayuga*’s prizes,—I shouted out, ‘Don’t fire into that ship, she has surrendered!’ Three of the enemy’s ships had surrendered to us before any of our vessels appeared, but when they did come up we all pitched in, and settled the eleven rebel vessels, in about twenty minutes. Our short fight with the *Gov. Moore*—it used

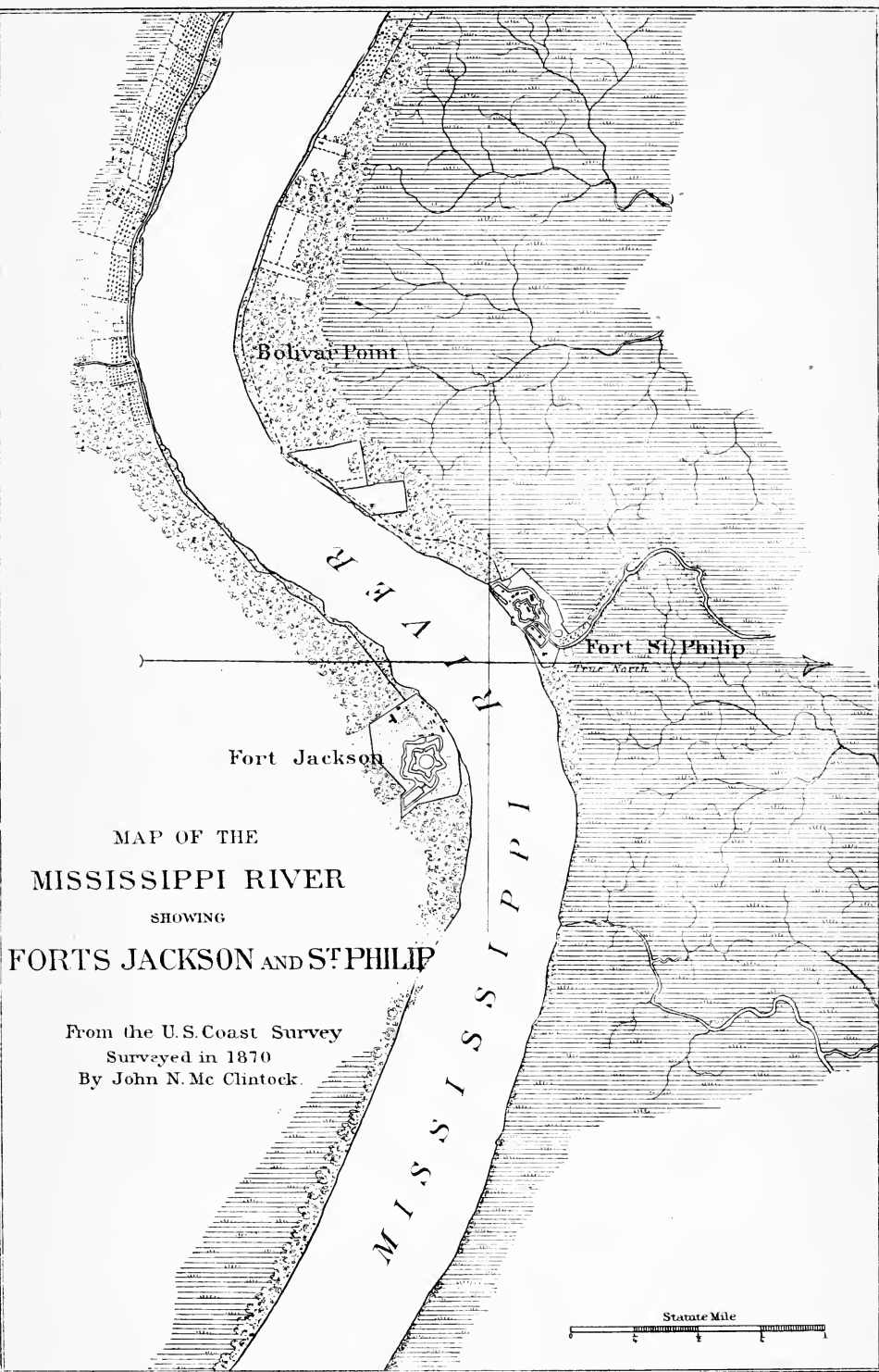
to be the *Morgan*—was very exciting. We were alongside of each other, and had both fired our guns, and it all depended on which should get reloaded first. The large forward gun on the *Gov. Moore* was a ten-inch shell, ours an eleven-inch, and we were so near they were almost muzzle to muzzle.

“*Ours was fired first*, and Beverly Kennon, the captain of the *Gov. Moore*, is now a prisoner on board the *Cayuga*. He tells me our shot was the one that ruined him,—disabled his vessel, capsized his gun, and killed thirteen of the gun’s crew. Beverly Kennon used to be an officer in our navy.

“The *Cayuga* still led the way up the river, and at daylight we discovered a regiment of infantry encamped on shore. As we were very close in, I shouted to them to come on board and deliver up their arms, or we would blow them all to pieces. It seemed rather odd for a regiment on shore to be surrendering to a ship! They hauled down their colors, and the colonel and command came on board and gave themselves up as prisoners of war. The regiment was called the Chalmette regiment, and has been quite a famous one. The officers we released on parole and allowed them to retain their side-arms, all except one captain, who I discovered was from New Hampshire. His name is Hickery, and he came from Portsmouth. I took his sword away from him and have kept it.

“The next thing that happened was the sinking of the *Varuna*, which had been disabled by one of the enemy’s vessels running into her. Soon after this the Commodore came up in the *Hartford* and ordered us all to anchor and take a little rest before attacking New Orleans, which was now within twenty miles.

“By this time our ship had received forty-two shots in masts and hull, and six of our men had been



MAP OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI RIVER  
SHOWING  
FORTS JACKSON AND ST. PHILIP

From the U.S. Coast Survey  
Surveyed in 1870  
By John N. Mc Clintock.

Statute Mile





wounded; one of the boys had to have one of his legs cut off. All this time, night and day, firerafts and ships loaded with burning cotton had been coming down the river and surrounding us everywhere. Besides these, the bombardment was continuous and perfectly awful. I do not believe there ever was anything like it before, and I never expect to see such a sight again. The river and shore were one blaze, and the sounds and explosions were terrific. Nothing I could say would give you any idea of these last twenty-four hours!

“The next morning, April 25, we all got under way again, the *Cayuga* still leading, and at about nine o'clock New Orleans hove in sight. We called all hands and gave three cheers and a tiger!

“There were two more fortifications still between us and New Orleans, called the Chalmette batteries, but Captain Bailey thought they could not be of much account, and that we had best push on. When we arrived in sight of these batteries, no flag floated over them, and there was not a man to be seen—nothing but the guns, which seemed abandoned. In fact, though, there were a lot of treacherous rascals concealed in these batteries, and when we had come close enough to make them feel sure they could sink us, they opened a heavy fire. We gave them back as well as we could, but they were too much for one gunboat; so, after getting hit fourteen times, and the shot and shell striking all about us, we decided not to advance any further until some of the ships came up. Soon we had the *Hartford* on one side and the *Pensacola* on the other, and then the rebel battery was silenced very quick.

“After this, there were no further obstacles between us and the city, and the fleet were soon anchored before it. The Commodore ordered Captain Bailey to go on shore, and demand its surrender, and he asked me to

go with him. We took just a boat and a boat's crew, with a flag of truce, and started off. When we reached the wharf there were no officials to be seen; no one received us, although the whole city was watching our movements, and the levee was crowded in spite of a heavy rain-storm. Among the crowd were many women and children, and the women were shaking rebel flags, and being rude and noisy.

"They were all shouting and hooting as we stepped on shore, but at last a man, who, I think, was a German, offered to show us the way to the council-room, where we should find the mayor of the city.

"As we advanced, the mob followed us in a very excited state. They gave three cheers for Jeff Davis and Beauregard, and three groans for Lincoln. Then they began to throw things at us, and shout, 'Hang them!' 'Hang them!' We both thought we were in a *bad fix*, but there was nothing for us to do, but just go on.

"We reached the city hall, though, in safety, and there we found the mayor and council. They seemed in a very solemn state of mind, though I must say, from what they said, they did not impress me as having much *mind* about anything, and certainly not much sense. The mayor said *he* had nothing to do with the city, as it was under martial law, and we were obliged to wait till General Lovell could arrive.

"In about half an hour this gentleman appeared. He was very pompous in his manner and silly and airy in his remarks. He had about fifteen thousand troops under his command, and said he would 'never surrender,' but would withdraw his troops from the city as soon as possible, when the city would fall into the hands of the mayor and he could do as he pleased with it.

"The mob outside had by this time become perfectly

infuriated. They kicked at the doors and swore they would have us out and hang us! Of course Captain Bailey and I *felt perfectly at our ease all this while!* Indeed, every person about us, who had any sense of responsibility, was frightened for our safety. As soon as the mob found out that General Lovell was not going to surrender, they swore they would have us out anyway; but Pierre Soule and some others went out and made speeches to them, and kept them on one side of the building while we went out the other, and were driven to the wharf in a close carriage. Finally we got on board ship all right; but of all the blackguarding I ever heard in my life that mob gave us the worst.

“The mayor told the flag-officer this morning that the city was in the hands of the mob, and was at our mercy, and that he might blow it up or do with it as he chose. They still fly the state flag on the custom-house, and as we have not yet any forces with which to land and make an attack, we can do nothing at present, unless we blow up the city.

“I do not know where General Butler is. So far, only fourteen of our fleet have passed the forts out of all the ships that started. None of us know what has become of them, and the forts have not yet surrendered. Until then, there can be no going up and down the river.

“This morning we have been ordered to take Captain Bailey down to a bayou, where he will pass out in a boat, and taking a ship below will proceed home, as bearer of despatches.

“We expect to make another attack on the forts to-morrow or next day, if General Butler arrives with the troops. The Southerners say our victory was one of the greatest ever known. They never dreamed of our being able to pass the forts; and if the attempt had

been made in the daytime, our fleet must surely all have been sunk. We may be in a bad fix now, if the forts do not fall, and it is not safe for any one to leave our ships and go anywhere in a boat. The mob rule in the city, and they are perfectly reckless. We are still feeling the effects of the excitement which the attack caused. Nothing is settled, and there is danger and risk about every movement.

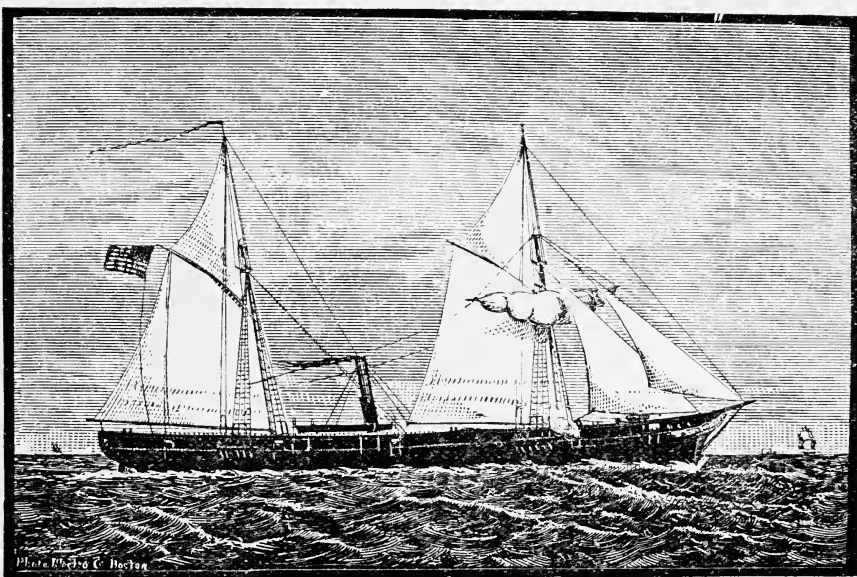
“I have written this letter at railroad speed. I am all right so far, as regards my health. We expect another good fight to-morrow or next day, when we go back to take the forts.

“I hope you are all well at home, and you must excuse this letter, for it seems as though I could not stop to form words. Should I ever see you again I can tell it all so much better. I cannot say yet how many men have been lost on our side, but I think the number is quite small.”

As is now well known, the forts surrendered soon after the city, and it was not necessary to make any further attack upon them. The passage of the river thus becoming safe and free, Captain Bailey was able to proceed home directly; and as the *Cayuga* was badly cut up by shot and shell, and needed to return for repairs, she was ordered to bring him as far as Hampton Roads on his journey. From there he went to Washington by land, while the *Cayuga* kept on to the Brooklyn navy yard.

The first intelligence received at the North of the passage of the forts was a report from the rebels. It appeared in the *New York Times* of Sunday, April 27th, 1862, and was headed, “An Important Report from the Rebels! One of our gunboats *above* Forts Jackson and St. Philip, sixty miles below New Orleans!”

“WASHINGTON, Saturday, April 26th. The Richmond *Examiner* of the 25th announces that one of our gunboats passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip, sixty miles below New Orleans, on the 24th. The report was telegraphed to Norfolk and brought to Fortress Monroe, under a flag of truce, and received from there to-day by the Navy Department.”



THE CAYUGA.

In the demand which Admiral Bailey made upon Admiral Farragut that a *correct* diagram of the order in which the ships passed the forts should be filed at the Navy Department, and that in this the *Cayuga* should be placed as leading, which she did,—and, eventually, far, far in advance,—all the other vessels to the attack, he quotes the above from the newspapers of the day to prove how far ahead she was, and adds :

“After passing the forts and capturing the Chalmette regiment, the *Cayuga* cut the telegraph between the forts and New Orleans, and there could be no further telegrams sent about the progress of our ships until the fleet arrived at New Orleans, that is, before the city itself.”

I insert here such extracts from Admiral Bailey's pamphlet, entitled “History Set Right,” as give an account of the movements and the part taken by the *Cayuga* in this famous naval battle. The *Army and Navy Journal* copied this pamphlet into its columns with this editorial heading :

“The following correspondence is reproduced from the files of the Navy Department. We publish it, in justice both to the truth of history and to the reputation of those gallant officers whom it most concerns :”

REAR ADMIRAL BAILEY TO ADMIRAL FARRAGUT.

“WASHINGTON, D. C., April 1, 1869.

“MY DEAR ADMIRAL :

“I feel compelled to call your attention to an oversight of which I spoke to you some time since, and which has afforded me, and other officers, the keenest annoyance, by historical statements growing out of the omission to make the desired correction.”

Admiral Bailey then proceeds to remind Admiral Farragut, at greater length than I will here quote, of the *verbal* arrangement by which the *Cayuga* was assigned as his (Captain Bailey's) flag-ship, Captain Bailey being second in command to Admiral Farragut. On the 20th of April, 1862, Admiral Farragut issued a *written* order and programme that the fleet should pass the forts two columns abreast, but after the chains and booms were cut, fearing that there would still be some obstructions in the channel which would endanger the

vessels, he issued a *verbal* order, that they should advance single file, line ahead, the *Cayuga* leading. Or, as Admiral Bailey says :

“After the chain and booms, constituting the enemy’s obstructions, were cut, it became apparent that if the fleet went up, in two columns abreast, according to your written order and programme, of the 20th of April, the *parallel* columns of vessels would probably get foul of the obstruction on either side, and the whole fleet hove into confusion under the fire of the enemy’s forts, especially as you had determined to make a night attack.’ Therefore with your proverbial foresight and sagacity, you ordered me to get my division of eight vessels under way as soon as the dusk of the evening should obscure the movement from the enemy, and anchor them line ahead near the east bank.”

Admiral Bailey proceeds to describe the action of the *Cayuga*, which, starting at the signal from the *Hartford*, passed up the river and ran by the forts successfully. An accident to the *Pensacola’s* machinery having caused a detention of those ships of Captain Bailey’s division astern of her, he says :

“Losing sight of them, we, in the *Cayuga* alone, encountered the rebel iron-clads, and their flotilla of gunboats, and maintained the conflict unaided, until Boggs in the *Varuna* came up, who, after delivering a broadside which came into the *Cayuga* instead of the enemy, passed up the river. The *Oncida* came up soon after and fired into a steamer that had already surrendered to us, being the *Cayuga’s* third prize. We then steamed up the river and captured the Chalmette regiment encamped on the west bank of the river.

\* \* \* \* \*

“To give a history of all the incidents of the battle within my observation, or the part which each vessel of

my division took, would make this communication too long. The great object of this letter is to call your attention to the fact that in the hurry of making up your despatches after the battle, you sent home the *written* order of the 20th of April, which has been published and passed into history, instead of your *verbal* order of the 23d, which was the one in accordance with which the fleet passed up the river, and the battle was fought. This error has resulted in an inextricable historical muddle, as the history of the battle has been written on the basis of the published programme of April 20th *never* carried out. The formation and position of the attacking force is therefore entirely misunderstood by the historians.

\* \* \* \* \*

“The resolution of the United States senate of June 6th, 1862, and accompanying documents, of which two thousand were printed, perpetuates the error of our passing the forts in two columns abreast.”

Admiral Bailey then enumerates the mistakes made by several historians of the war, who had been led to treat the part taken by the *Cayuga* with neglect and injustice on account of Admiral Farragut's erroneous reports, and continues thus :

“The leading up, and heavy single-hand fighting of the *Cayuga*, her taking the surrender of three of the enemy's gunboats, and the Chalmette regiment of infantry ; and cutting the telegraphic communication between the forts and New Orleans, and other circumstances, are not mentioned.”

Admiral Bailey closes with an earnest demand that if the facts of history cannot be truthfully presented in any other way, then a board of inquiry should be instituted, and they should be ascertained and placed on record correctly.



To this first appeal of Admiral Bailey, Admiral Faragut did not make a very satisfactory reply, which drew the following clear and spirited statement from Admiral Bailey :

“WASHINGTON, D. C., April 27, 1869.

“MY DEAR ADMIRAL :

“I have received, and carefully read, your letter of the 3d, in reply to mine of the 1st instant, and admit all you say about prominently mentioning my name to the department. But you remark, ‘As to historians I can do nothing.’ This is so; but the difficulty is that the historians derived their erroneous account of the battle from your report of the 6th of May, 1862, and from the diagram which you sent to the department, as the true order of sailing into the battle with the forts. Those who have written on the subject are not to be blamed for citing the official reports. I hope to prevent similar error and confusion for the future. I do so with the greatest reluctance, as a duty to the officers under my immediate command and myself, and I appeal to your sense of justice whether I could do less.

“You state—‘I have just re-read my [your] report of May 6th, and your [my] two reports following, and cannot conceive how you could be more prominently mentioned to the department.

“‘In the former you are reported as leading the right column in the gunboat *Cayuga*, and as having preceded me to the quarantine station.’

“How could there have been a ‘right’ and a ‘left’ column practically, when I led my division to the attack and passage of the forts, an hour before you lifted anchors? What I did was done by your orders and inspiration, and to you the world has given the credit of the attack and its success, as fully as it gave to Lord Nelson the credit of the battle of the Nile, but

did it detract from his glory that the report of the battle described how it was fought, and gave the exact position of his vessel and those of his subordinates?

\* \* \* \* \*

“I enclose a copy of the, to us, unfortunate diagram as attached to your report of the battle, which you will notice places the *Cayuga*, my flag gunboat, third in line of my division, whereas that gunboat should have been recorded first in line *leading*.

“I would ask of your friendship and your fairness, whether the diagram you sent gives the faintest idea of the action, and whether if the names of the vessels were altered, it would not apply equally well, or better, to many other battles?

“As an evidence how far the *Cayuga* was ahead of the rest of the fleet, the first news received at the North is announced in the New York *Times* of Sunday, April 27th, 1862, thus :

“‘An important report from the rebels. One of our gunboats above Forts Jackson and St. Philip, Washington, Saturday, April 26th. The Richmond *Examiner* of the 25th announces that one of our gunboats passed Forts Jackson and St. Philip sixty miles below New Orleans on the 24th. The report was telegraphed to Norfolk, and brought to Fortress Monroe under flag of truce, and received from there to-day by the Navy Department.’

“The next rebel telegram announced the arrival of the fleet before the city. The *Cayuga* in the interval had captured the Chalmette regiment, five miles above the forts, and cut the telegraphic communication between forts and city, so that the fleet was not again reported until it arrived opposite New Orleans.

“Now, my dear Admiral, you have entirely misconceived the object of my addressing you. It is not to

complain that you have not mentioned me prominently in your despatch, but it is because in your report of the battle dated May 6th, and the accompanying diagram, you do not give the circumstances of the fight as they occurred, but those which would apply to your former plan, which was abandoned.

“From that report the reader would infer that the fleet went to the attack of the forts in two columns abreast, when it was done in single column, line ahead; that the *Hartford* was the leading vessel, when in reality it was the *ninth* in line astern of the *Cayuga*, and there was no left or right of line, but single file. That you should for a moment leave so erroneous a report on record, uncorrected, is a matter of surprise to your officers, and that you should not have made the correction as soon as your attention was called to it, is still more embarrassing to us.

\* \* \* \* \*

“I have delayed my reply because I wished to be certain that I said nothing in haste that would be annoying to you or improper in me to say, and I hope you will now see the matter as I and others do, and make the correction so necessary to justice in your report dated May 6, 1862, and substitute a diagram of the actual positions your vessels and officers occupied in the line of attack, in the place of those now on the files of the Navy Department.

“I have the honor to be,

“Respectfully, your obedient servant,

“THEODORUS BAILEY, *Rear Admiral*.

CORRECTION BY ADMIRAL FARRAGUT.

“NEW YORK, May 19, 1869.

“MY DEAR ADMIRAL:

\* \* \* \* \*

“It affords me pleasure to make the correction you

desire in the diagram of the Mississippi battle, as I now fully comprehend what you wish in this matter.

“In fact, I cannot understand how this sketch of the first proposed order of battle—wherein you are placed *third* instead of at the head of the column—should have been attached to the report, in lieu of the one which was afterward adopted.

“By referring to this report you will observe that the diagram accompanies a general order, issued four days before the action, as a preparatory plan of attack, which was subsequently changed. But still I cannot understand why, even in this sketch, you should not have been placed at the head of the starboard column.

“This diagram, as you are aware, was the original plan, to be changed, as a matter of course, as circumstances might justify, and the vessels were placed according to the rank of the officers respectively commanding them, but should not have made part of the report of the final action, as, on reflection, I decided that when the chains were parted the plan of ‘line ahead’ should be adopted, as the best calculated for the preservation of the vessels, and for avoiding all chances of fouling. Therefore when the time arrived, and the signal given, the order of sailing was changed to line of battle, the verbal instructions to which you allude were carried out, and you led at the head of your division, and it has always afforded me the greatest pleasure to say that you performed your duties most fearlessly and gallantly.

“For this reason I was, at the outset, a little surprised that you should have apparently complained of my report, but my examination of the printed diagram has fully satisfied me of the justice of your appeal.

“I shall, therefore, forward to the department a cor-

rect sketch of the final attack as we passed up the river. "I am very truly,

"Your friend and obedient servant,

"D. G. FARRAGUT, *Admiral, U. S. N.*"

#### THE CORRECTED DIAGRAM.

Copied from the amended diagram on file in the navy department, and certified to be a true copy :

HOLMES E. OFFLEY, *Chief Clerk.*

June 2, 1869.

Order of the fleet in passing up to the attack of forts Jackson and St. Philip, April 24th, 1862 :

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| First Division leading  | o <i>Cayuga</i> , Lt. Com. Harrison.    |
| under command of        | o <i>Pensacola</i> , flag gunboat,      |
| Capt. Theodorus Bailey. | Capt. H. W. Morris.                     |
|                         | o <i>Mississippi</i> , Capt. M. Smith.  |
|                         | <i>Oneida</i> , Comd'r S. P. Lee.       |
|                         | o <i>Varuna</i> , Comd'r C. S. Boggs.   |
|                         | o <i>Katahdin</i> , Lt. Com. G. H.      |
|                         | Preble.                                 |
|                         | o <i>Kineo</i> , Lt. Com. Ransom.       |
|                         | o <i>Wissahickon</i> , Lt. Com. A. N.   |
|                         | Smith.                                  |
| Chain and obstructions, | . . . . .                               |
| Centre Division.        |   |
| Admiral D. G. Farragut. |   |
|                         | o <i>Hartford</i> , Com. Wainwright.    |
|                         | o <i>Brooklyn</i> , Capt. T. J. Craven. |
|                         | o <i>Richmond</i> , Com. J. Alden.      |
| Third Division,         | o <i>Sciota</i> , Lieut. Com. Donald-   |
| Capt. H. H. Bell.       | son.                                    |
|                         | o <i>Iroquois</i> , Com. De Camp.       |
|                         | o <i>Kennebec</i> , Lieut. Com. Rus-    |
|                         | sell.                                   |
|                         | o <i>Pinola</i> , Lieut. Com. Crosby.   |
|                         | o <i>Itasca</i> , Lieut. Com. Cald-     |
|                         | well.                                   |
|                         | o <i>Winone</i> , Lieut. Com. Nich-     |
|                         | olls.                                   |

Very respectfully,

D. G. FARRAGUT.

## LETTERS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

“NEW YORK, May 24, 1869.

“SIR: My attention having been called by Rear Admiral Bailey to an incorrect sketch which accompanied my report of May 6, 1862, upon the passage of forts Jackson and St. Philip, I have the honor to forward herewith a corrected diagram, showing the position of the vessels at the time they passed through the obstructions after the chains had been separated. This will demonstrate that Rear Admiral (then Captain) Bailey led the fleet in the *Cayuga* up to the attack on the forts, as had been previously ordered.

\* \* \* \* \*

“This correction has not been made before, because I was not aware of the existence of the mistake—the diagram being evidently a clerical error, and in opposition to the text, in which I distinctly state, that Rear Admiral Bailey not only led, but performed his duty with great gallantry, to which I called the attention of the department.

“Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“D. G. FARRAGUT, *Admiral, U. S. N.*

“HON. A. E. BORIE, Secretary of the Navy, Washington.”

“WASHINGTON, D. C., May 25, 1869.

“HON. A. E. BORIE, SECRETARY OF THE NAVY:

“SIR: I have the honor to enclose herewith, original and certified copies of a correspondence which I have had with Admiral D. G. Farragut, relating to the battle below New Orleans, and to request that the letters marked from A to E be placed on the file in the Navy Department as furnishing a correction of that officer's report with an accompanying diagram heretofore made to the department.

“The object of my addressing Admiral Farragut is now gained by the admission on his part of the correctness of my statements, that the fleet under his command went up the Mississippi river to attack and pass Forts Jackson and St. Philip in order of battle, ‘line ahead’ or single file; that I led the fleet into battle at the head of, and in command of, the Vanguard Division, and that the *Hartford*, flagship with Admiral Farragut on board, followed my division, he being thus ninth in line, and at the head of the rest of the fleet in the order represented by the list of vessels which I hereto annex.

“After this frank admission by my distinguished commander, I have only the regret remaining that the error into which he was led was not discovered and corrected at an earlier date.

“I have the honor to be,

“Respectfully, your obedient servant,

“THEODORUS BAILEY,

“*Rear Admiral, U. S. N.*”

Before opening this correspondence with Admiral Farragut, Admiral Bailey wrote George a letter, from which I make the following extracts :

“349 FIFTH AVENUE,

“NEW YORK, March 19, 1869.

“MY DEAR PERKINS :

“Since you left, I was ordered here on court-martial duty, leaving my family in Washington.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Will you please state to me what is your recollection of the facts about Farragut and his general orders, issued on the 20th April, 1862, with accompanying programme? He contemplated going up the river in two columns, the *Hartford*, with his blue flag, heading

the left or western column of vessels, and the *Cayuga*, bearing my flag, the right or eastern column. But after the chain and boom obstructions of the rebels were cut, it became manifest that if we went up in two columns as proposed, both columns would (in the night) be liable to get foul of the obstructions, under the guns and fire of the forts. Admiral Farragut, therefore, with his usual good sense and sagacity, on the afternoon of the 23d of April, *verbally* changed the programme and order of sailing, ordering me \* \* \* to lead in the *Cayuga* with my whole division past the forts, which we successfully did.

“After the battles, Farragut sent home, and had published, the order and programme of the *twentieth* of April, by which the false impression is recorded and placed on the files of the department, and the error has become history,—that the fleet passed the forts in two columns, headed by himself. He has made no mention of his having annulled verbally said order, and ordering me to lead up past the forts in the *Cayuga* in single file, line ahead. Or, that my whole division so passed up, and was fighting the enemy’s fleet *above* the forts, before Farragut in the *Hartford* got under fire.

“History, in consequence of the suppression of the aforementioned facts in the report of the Commander-in-Chief, has not done me or my command the justice due us, and I must look to the young officers who served with me on that glorious occasion to help me make the correction.

\* \* \* \* \*

“With kind regard,

“I remain, truly your friend,

“THEODORUS BAILEY, *Rear Adm’l*.

“Lieut. Comd’r,

“GEORGE H. PERKINS, Concord, N. H.”



George replied to this letter and supported Admiral Bailey in the entirely just claim which he made for a correction of Admiral Farragut's report.

George's letters home, written almost in the midst of the attack on the forts and while ascending to New Orleans, bear evidence, which cannot be doubted, of the truth of Admiral Bailey's claim, and give a report, whose genuineness cannot be disputed, of the part taken by the *Cayuga*. Admiral Farragut's indifference to the promotion and rewards of his junior officers was the subject of much comment in the service, and was a blot upon his fame. At meetings for the purpose, which were held when the war was over, Farragut manifested perfect indifference to the interests of those who served him so faithfully. He was fully aware of their merits, and, as regards my brother, often spoke most appreciatively in his praise. Only a month before Admiral Farragut's death, he said to a naval officer, in talking over the battles of New Orleans and Mobile :

"Perkins was young and handsome, and as brave a man as ever trod the deck of a ship."

I return to note Admiral Bailey's reply to George. He says :

"Your letter has been received, and the narrative of the facts very cleverly and lucidly written. I have written to Admiral Farragut requesting that the records of the fight be corrected so as to conform to the facts. I may have to quote from your letter, and beg you to accept my thanks for it."

Extracts from the reports of the battle of New Orleans, as given in the New York *Herald* at different dates during the month of May, 1862 :

"Lieut. Beverly Kennon, late of the U. S. Navy, is now our prisoner. In the engagement of Thursday

morning he commanded the steamer *Gov. Moore*, formerly the *Morgan*. Kennon states that the fight was one of unparalleled fury. The *Cayuga* fired a stand of grape at his pivot gun, where fifteen men were stationed; thirteen were killed by it, one man alone and himself escaping. This Kennon is a secessionist and a savage. Previous to the fight his steward in some manner displeased him, and he hacked him to pieces with his sword and threw him overboard half alive. He set his ship on fire without making any attempt to rescue his wounded."

"The little *Cayuga* deserves more than a passing notice, and Captain Bailey's and Lieutenant Commander Harrison's reports are full of interest. Her gallant leading on the morning of the 24th, and the eading of the fleet on the noon of the 25th, and thus remaining, receiving, and returning a heavy fire for over a quarter of an hour, ranks her *primero* of her class.

"Late in the afternoon of April 28th, 1862, the *Cayuga* turned her head down the river, bearing the dispatches of the glorious victory. Captain Bailey goes home in her as bearer of dispatches to the Navy Department."

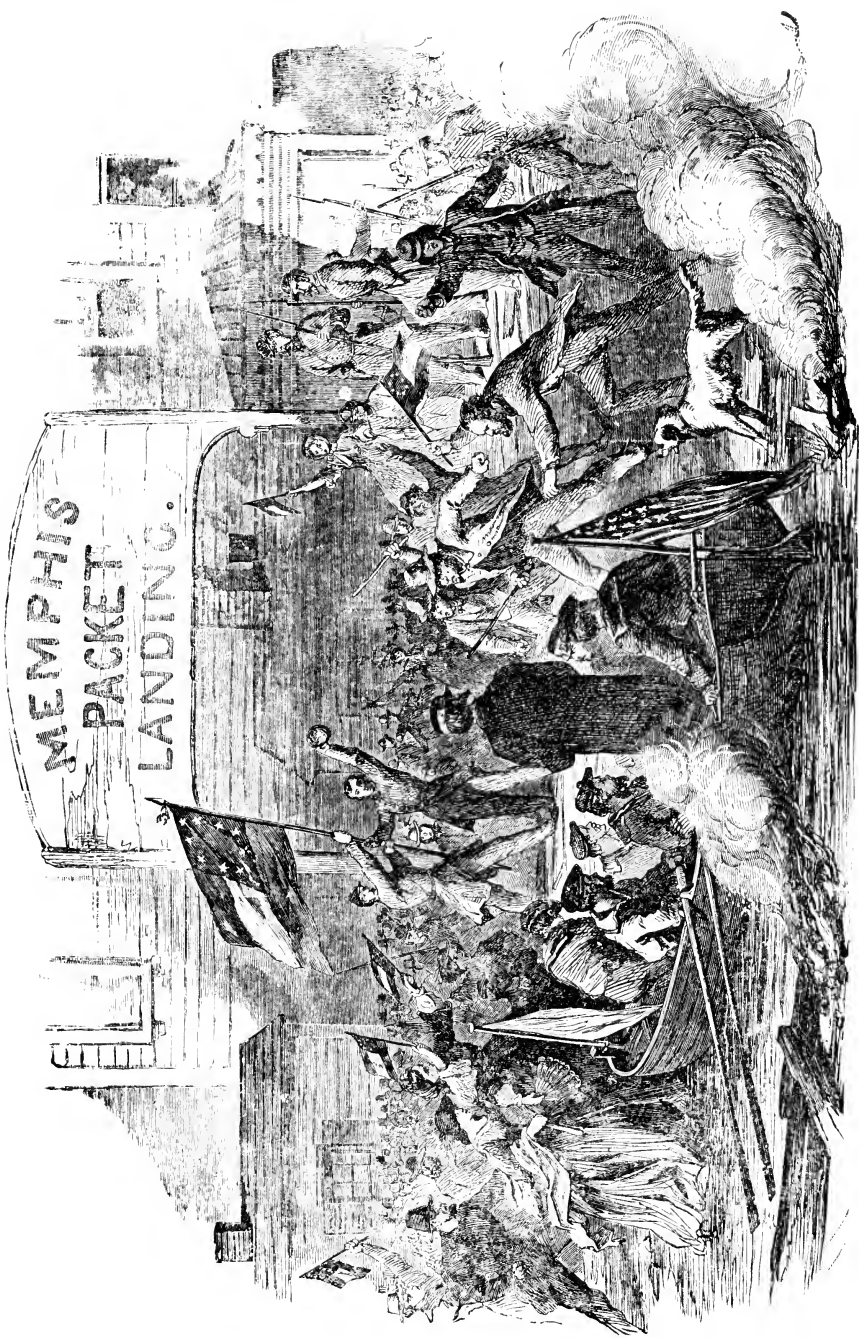
#### ARRIVAL OF TROPHIES FROM NEW ORLEANS.

"WASHINGTON, May 9, 1862.

"Captain Bailey of the gunboat *Cayuga* reached here to-day with dispatches and trophies. Among these is a splendid silk flag that was borne by the old Chalmette regiment."

#### HERALD CORRESPONDENT'S ACCOUNT OF THE PASSAGE OF THE FORTS.

"Shot, shell, grape, and canister filled the air with deadly missiles. It was like the breaking up of a



GOING ASHORE AT NEW ORLEANS.



thousand worlds. Crash—tear—whiz! Such another scene was never witnessed by mortal man. And to add to this state of affairs, thirteen steamers and the floating battery *Louisiana* of the enemy were pouring into and around us a hailstorm of iron perfectly indescribable. To add to this, fireraft after fireraft, burning fiercely, was around or bearing down upon us.”

Admiral Farragut’s report gives a general confirmatory statement of the preceding extracts. From Captain Bailey’s and Lieutenant Commander Harrison’s I will quote the following, premising that the first of Captain Bailey’s report explains the reason why the *Cayuga*, a gunboat, was chosen for his flagship, which was chiefly because a light draught vessel would be required to cross the bar :

“At two a. m. on the morning of the 24th, the signal to advance was thrown out from the flagship. The *Cayuga* immediately weighed anchor and led on the column. We were discovered at the boom, and at a little beyond both forts opened their fire. When close up with *St. Philip* we opened with grape and canister, still steering on. After passing this line of fire, we encountered the Montgomery flotilla, consisting of eighteen gunboats, including the ram *Manassas*, and iron battery *Louisiana* of twenty guns.

“This was a moment of anxiety, as no supporting ship was in sight. By skilful steering,\* however, we avoided their attempts to butt and board, and had succeeded in forcing the surrender of three, when the *Varuna*, Captain Boggs, and *Oncida*, Captain Lee, were discovered near at hand.

“At early dawn we discovered a rebel camp at the right bank of the river. \* \* \* This proved to be

\* I cannot help calling attention to this unconscious compliment to George.

the Chalmette regiment. On the morning of the 25th, still leading, and considerably ahead of the line, the Chalmette batteries, situated three miles below the city, opened a cross-fire on the *Cayuga*. To this we responded with our two guns. At the end of twenty minutes the flagship ranged up alongside and silenced the enemy.

“From this point no other obstacles were encountered except burning steamers, cotton ships, firerafts, and the like. Immediately after anchoring in front of the city I was ordered on shore by the flag-officer to demand the surrender of the city, and that the flag should be hoisted on the post-office, custom-house, and mint.

\* \* \* \* \*

“On the 28th of April both forts surrendered to Commander Porter. \* \* \* Lieutenant Commanding N. B. Harrison was gallantly sustained by Lieutenant George H. Perkins, and Acting Master Thomas H. Morton. These officers have my unbounded admiration.”

Lieutenant Commanding Harrison gives an extract from the ship's log, repeating previous statements, and then says :

“We were struck forty-two times. Both masts are so badly hurt as to be unfit for further service. Our eleven-inch Dahlgren carriage struck, but still fit for duty. The smoke stack perforated, but not materially injured. All other damages have been repaired. I regret to add that six of our crew have been wounded, but so far the surgeon has made but one amputation.

“It is needless for me to inform you, who had us under your own eyes, that all did their duty fearlessly and well ; but I must commend to your especial notice

my executive officer, Lieutenant George H. Perkins. The remarkable coolness and precision of this young officer, while aiding me in steering the vessel through the barrier and past the forts, under their long and heavy fire, must have attracted your attention."

\* \* \* \* \*

"APRIL 25. I continue this report through the battles of to-day. At 11 a. m., being at that moment some half a mile in advance of the flag-ship, the batteries on either hand opened on us at short range. Being pivoted to port, I edged off with the port helm, and responded with one 11-inch and Parrott slowly, but with great precision of aim. This unequal contest lasted just fifteen minutes, when the flag-ship ranged up in splendid style, diverting their fire.

\* \* \* \* \*

"We were again repeatedly hulled and much cut up in spars and rigging, and the iron stock of the port anchor cut away.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Respectfully,

"N. B. HARRISON, *Lieutenant Commanding.*

"CAPTAIN T. BAILEY, *Second in Command,*

"*Commanding Leading Division of Gunboat.*"

In this report of Lieutenant Commanding Harrison, it is to be noticed that he addresses Captain Bailey as "Commanding *Leading* Division of Gunboats."

In *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, published May 31st, 1862, there is a sketch by their special artist, William Ward, who was on the spot, representing "The landing of Captain Bailey and Lieutenant Perkins on the levee, New Orleans, with a flag of truce to demand the surrender of the city."

It is a spirited sketch, and doubtless derives its spirit from its truth. The frantic mob is depicted rushing towards the little boat with only eight occupants, six sailors and two officers, in whose faces rebel flags are being shaken, with the accompaniment of pistols and fists—the howls and curses are easily imagined.

In the same paper is a picture of Captain Bailey and a short notice of him, which speaks of his having taken the first Confederate flag in the advance on New Orleans, and as having been sent to Washington with despatches and trophies, in compliment to the bravery he had displayed.

From a rebel paper, the New Orleans *Democrat*, I copy extracts of its account of Captain Bailey's and Lieutenant Perkins's proceedings when they went to demand the surrender of the city. The bombastic style in which this is written, and the determination of the writer to prove that New Orleans was not conquered and could not be surrendered, are positively ludicrous, and the whole thing is entertaining as a specimen of Southern newspaper writing—except that there is a most tragic side to the folly and selfishness and wilfulness that caused a whole country such suffering.

The article describes fluently the rebel efforts to protect the city ; gives minutely the genealogy and family connections of the commanding officers, and though it is reluctantly compelled to admit that one of them was a sign-painter, yet vouchsafes to him the condescending phrase of “good citizen.” Our fleet, as it appeared before New Orleans, is thus described :

“Slowly and majestically the large steamers moved on until they rounded the bend and entered the crescent part of the city. There a scene confronted them which must have been little gratifying to their highest instincts, how much soever it may have pampered the



pride of physical force and the exultation of victory over a defenceless but intrepid foe.

“There lay the sullen and gloomy city, still smoking with the patriotic conflagration by which it had destroyed everything that might minister to the pride and avarice of the enemy. Its long levee and vast wharves bare of everything that usually appertains to a great commercial city, and now densely packed by a multitude of frowning, defiant, frantic men, women, and children. This multitude seemed to be moved by one impulse, one passion, by one bitter, burning, inextinguishable hate,” etc., etc., on through columns of pompous sentences, whose language is inflated by sectional spite, untempered by one ray of reason. The article is divided into heads, and the next extract is from that portion entitled “Elemental and Popular Wrath:”

“Just as the fleet had taken position to anchor, a sudden storm blew up and the rain began to fall with great violence, dispersing or greatly reducing the crowd on the levee. This rain continued for some hours. In the midst of it a boat was seen to put off from a ship. It landed at the foot of Laurel street, where a large crowd quickly gathered. Out of the boat stepped an elderly, corpulent officer with a very red face, a grave expression, and an air of command. He wore his sword, and was accompanied by a young and handsome naval officer. These proved to be Captain Bailey, second in command of the fleet, and Lieutenant Perkins. They asked the direction to the mayor’s office. There was no one in the crowd to answer. They were told to find their own way. Accordingly they started up the street, in the pelting, furious rain, followed by the crowd, which increased in their progress, yelling and shouting, ‘Down with the Yankees!’ ‘Kill them!’ ‘Hang them!’

“Several citizens here rushed forward to protect the officers. They were repelled and roughly handled by the furious mob. The Federal officers were in great danger. At last two venerable and much respected citizens—William Freret and L. E. Forstall, a member of the city council—made their way through the crowd, which was threatening the officers with speedy destruction, and each seizing the arm of one of the officers conducted them in safety to the mayor’s office.

“SCENE IN THE CITY HALL.

“The mayor with his friends, several members of the city government, several prominent citizens, including Mr. Soule, were present when Captain Theodorus Bailey and Lieutenant Perkins were introduced. Meantime a vast and excited crowd had collected around the city hall, whose shouts and cries could be distinctly heard within. Captain Bailey quickly stated his mission to the mayor. He came by order of Commodore Farragut, commanding the fleet now in the port, to demand the surrender of the city and the elevation of the flag over the custom-house, the mint, the post-office, and the city hall.

“PROMPT ANSWER OF THE MAYOR.

“The mayor replied: ‘I am not the military commander of the city. I have no authority to surrender it, and would not do it if I had. There is a military commander now in the city, who is charged by the Confederate States with the defences of the city. To him your command must be addressed. I will send for him if you desire.’ Captain Bailey assented, and a messenger was despatched for General Lovell.

“LOVELL APPEARS.

“Presently there was a hurrah without—a parting of the crowd—and Major General Lovell made his way

up the steps and into the mayor's office. He was introduced to Captain Bailey, who declared his character and credentials, as second in command of the United States fleet now before the city.

“General Lovell—‘I am Major-General Lovell, Confederate Commander of this Department.’

“Captain Bailey then stated his mission in the same terms as he had made it known to the mayor, adding that he was instructed by Commodore Farragut to express his great regret at the destruction of private property in the city.

“General Lovell—‘In reply to his demand, say to Commodore Farragut that I decline to surrender the city, nor will I allow it to be surrendered; that being unable to fight him on water, I have sent my troops out of the city; that there are now no armed troops in the city, nothing but women and children, and if he desires to shell them he can do so on his own responsibility,’ etc., etc.

“Lovell finally closed by saying that he would retire and leave the city authorities to pursue their own course in the matter. For himself he would go back to the army with which he would be happy to meet them in fair and equal combat.

“Captain Bailey replied, and again said how much Commodore Farragut regretted to see so much property uselessly destroyed.

“General Lovell—‘It was done by my orders, sir!’ With this the interview terminated. Captain Bailey requested an escort back to his boat as a protection against the mob, who seemed to be very violent and threatening. It was suggested they be taken out through the rear of the building in charge of two Confederate majors, while Mr. Soule and General Lovell addressed the crowd in front.”

Thus ended this scene, so full of ludicrous display of Southern logic, and so fraught with deadly peril to the lives of two brave men.

In this connection should be read the correspondence of Commodore Farragut and the mayor of New Orleans, in which the Commodore, after considering several insolent and bombastic communications from the city functionary, gave up the intercourse with mingled despair and contempt, and referred the whole affair to General Butler.

From an article published in the *New York Century* of April, 1885, and written by the distinguished author, George W. Cable, I extract the following description of Captain Bailey and George as they went to demand the surrender of New Orleans :

“The crowds on the levee howled and screamed with rage, and now the rain came down in sheets. About one or two o’clock in the afternoon (as I remember), I being again in the store with but one door ajar, came a roar of shoutings and imprecations and crowding feet down Common street—‘Hurrah for Jeff Davis! Hurrah for Jeff Davis! Shoot them! Kill them! Hang them!’ I locked the door on the outside and ran to the front of the mob, bawling with the rest, ‘Hurrah for Jeff Davis!’ About every third man there had a weapon out. Two officers of the United States Navy were walking abreast, unguarded and alone, looking not to right or left, never frowning, never flinching, while the mob screamed in their ears, shook cocked pistols in their faces, cursed and crowded and gnashed upon them. So through the gates of death these two men walked to the city hall to demand the town’s surrender. It was one of the bravest deeds I ever saw done.”

The accompanying wood cut is also taken from the *Century*.

When the *Cayuga* arrived in New York it was found that the necessary repairs would detain her there for some time, and this gave George an opportunity to make a short visit home, where it is needless to say he was received with enthusiasm by his family and friends. Many congratulatory letters were written to him and to his family at this time; some from noted people, but, I regret to say, they were not generally preserved.

The following is from an old friend of George's father, who had known George well as a little boy :

“MY DEAR JUDGE :

“I received a paper in which was an article in relation to the conduct of your noble boy at New Orleans; and in relating his story, and reading the notice of him to my friends, I never have failed to add with some pride that he was the son of my old friend, and that the young hero, when he was a ‘little cuss,’ bit my finger because I plagued him about his powny.\*

“Among the photographs in our album, his stands conspicuous, and I congratulate you and Mrs. Perkins upon the honorable position he has taken in our gallant navy.

“I knew of the part he had taken before I received the paper, as from the deep interest I take in the suppression of this wicked rebellion there is little occurs that escapes my observation. My oldest son is in the Butler expedition, but was not at New Orleans.

“My second son is a volunteer officer in the navy; was on board the *Hetzel* at Newberne, N. C., but would have been at New Orleans had his vessel not

\* Which was George's childish way of pronouncing pony.

been wrecked and burned at Currituck Island on the 25th of February last. He was in the naval fight at Hilton Head, and his vessel shot away the rebel flag-staff. He was also off Fortress Monroe, in the *Roanoke*, when the engagement took place, in which the fortunate advent of the *Monitor* saved our fleet. I shall send an account of your son's action to my sons.

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"I am ashamed to think that the element of treason is so rampant and defiant, and that while your boy and mine are fighting for their country and its liberties, there are those at home who would exult over our misfortunes, and pray for the discomfiture of our arms. May these traitors receive a traitor's doom!

"I am,

"Very truly yours,

"WM. S. MORTON."

Mr. Morton, writing at a later date, says: "I received a letter from my son a few days since, and he informs me that your son George had called upon him in New Orleans, and that he had been to see George on board ship. He writes that he likes your son very much,—that it is pleasant to fall in with such a true, loyal, and bold-spoken man. He says that George hates a traitor, and makes it manifest whenever he speaks."

The *New Hampshire Patriot*, of May 14th, 1862, contained the following:

"LIEUTENANT GEORGE H. PERKINS.

"Among the naval officers who distinguished themselves in the naval conflicts, resulting in the capture of New Orleans, no one receives higher commendation, in the official reports of the commanding officers, than our young friend, Lieut. George H. Perkins, son of Judge

H. E. Perkins of this city. He was executive officer of the gunboat *Cayuga*, Lieutenant Commanding N. B. Harrison. This vessel led the column in the passage of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and Captain Bailey, the Commander of the Division, was on board of her."

The article then gives an account of the Battle of New Orleans, with extracts from Captain Bailey's and Lieutenant Commanding Harrison's reports, and closes by saying :

"No vessel of the fleet did better service than the *Cayuga*, and no officer displayed greater gallantry, or won more honorable distinction, than Lieutenant Perkins."

After his short glimpse of home, George hastened back to New York to resume his duties on the *Cayuga*. His mother writes him :

"I hear you very highly spoken of by every one. Your father was introduced to Professor Patterson yesterday as the 'father of Lieutenant Perkins of the *Cayuga*.' Professor Patterson at once said he was familiar with your name, and had seen an account of your bravery in the papers. I suppose now we shall be known as the relatives of the brave Lieutenant Perkins! I confess I do not realize you as famous. You seem to me the same little boy I used to scold about his spelling. The mothers all say you are so fortunate because you are so good and thoughtful of me."

George writes home from New York : "I have had a letter from Captain Harrison telling me that he is not coming back to this ship, and that he has applied for me at the department, but I hardly think I shall be detached.

"I hear that Captain Fairfax is to have command, and I shall be glad, for I like him. We are working

at the ship all the time to have her ready as soon as possible."

Captain Fairfax did receive the command, and wrote to George :

"I was gratified yesterday to learn through Temple that you are still attached to the *Cayuga*, and are willing—learning that I am detached to command her—to remain as her executive officer. I receive it as a compliment that my joining her determined you on staying by the little gunboat that acted so important a part at the great naval battle in the Mississippi.

"Really it is the bright feature in joining to find you the first lieutenant; without flattery I say it, you are my choice. I will be content to lie on my oars and give you full charge. So go ahead and do anything you think is necessary, as though really captain. I shall really be delighted to take you by the hand again. It will recall the associations out on the coast. How many officers that we knew there have left us for the South!

"Make such choice of steward, boys, etc., as you please. I have confidence in your taste and judgment; and if you make a mistake, I will not think hard of it. I am so much pleased at having *you* that I am content. We must have a happy, efficient craft!

"Yours truly,

"DONALD M. FAIRFAX."

While he stays in New York, George writes at different dates as follows :

"JUNE 4, 1862.

"We are ordered to return to the Gulf and report to Commodore Farragut, and the ship will soon be ready for sea. She looks better than she ever did, and we have a larger crew, and carry two more guns. But we have suffered a great loss in the departure of Mr. Mor-



ton and Mr. Rogers. Mr. Morton has resigned, and Mr. Rogers is detached, and I am very sorry for the change."

"JUNE 8, 1862.

"Dr. Bogart, who is our surgeon, I like very much. His father lives on Staten Island, and has a large family. I enjoy going there for it makes me think of home. People are very polite to me, and I have a great many invitations to visit, and might have a very gay time. Last night I went to a delightful little dancing party at the Commodore's, and I half fell in love with a beautiful girl from Troy! It is fortunate I am going to sea so soon.

"Love to the boys, who, I hope, will enjoy their trip to the White Mountains.

"I have an idea that this cruise will be over about next May, and, mother, if I am at home next summer, you and I must certainly go to the mountains together.

"Well, I never sit down to write home without getting homesick. I will send letters every opportunity I have, and you must not feel anxious about me—everything comes out for the best."

The next letter is dated

"BATON ROUGE, July 25, 1862.

"We left New Orleans on the 19th and arrived here yesterday. It was quite exciting coming up the river. We had received information that twelve thousand guerillas were near Baton Rouge committing all sorts of depredations on the Union people.

"We anchored one night to guard a poor woman whose husband had been taken by the rebels the night before, and they threatened her, if she told, to come back and burn the house. I went ashore about ten

o'clock at night to see that everything was right. They told me it was very risky, but I was not molested. Baton Rouge looks quite pretty from the river. We expect attacks every night, and I think rather than have us hold the place, they will destroy it.

"I am having rather a hard time, for I am not well and am under the doctor's care. Being sick in this hot climate and in such small quarters on board ship is not very pleasant, and keeps one fretting all the time. Tell father I have drunk up all the cider he gave me, and it was just what I wanted this warm weather."

"OFF DONALDSONVILLE,  
"MISSISSIPPI RIVER, July 28, 1862.

"Since I wrote last we have been on the *qui vive* about a ram which has appeared in the river. They say it attacked Farragut's fleet, which is somewhere near Vicksburg, and after causing a great deal of destruction, actually went through the whole of the two large fleets, and got safely under the guns at Vicksburg, and that really this ram has the whole command of the river."

"JULY 30, 1862.

"We had received orders to proceed up the Red River, but this morning we saw all the Commodore's fleet coming down the Mississippi from Vicksburg with all the troops, and there is a change of programme. It seems the Commodore has received positive orders from the department to take the fleet to Pensacola and prepare for more important service.

"I am sorry Commodore Farragut's winding up in this river has turned out so. I cannot help thinking that if the department had sustained him, the river would have been cleared long ago. Anybody would grow inert with his wheels continually blocked!

“Before coming here we ran up to the mouth of the Red River, and had a short engagement with two rebel vessels; but they ran away from us into shallow water. We got aground in trying to follow them and were in great danger, for if they had known it and had come back, I am afraid they could have taken us.”

“NEW ORLEANS, August 4, 1862.

“We are staying here for a short time before going to Pensacola, where we follow the fleet. I have met a good many of my old friends, and have been about to see the sights of the city,—have driven out on the famous shell-road, etc.,—but I am much disappointed in them all, and everything strikes me as rather miserable and filthy. The people ought to have some gratitude to General Butler, for he is trying to get the city clean, and he keeps good order.”

At this time our troops were driven back from Baton Rouge by the rebels, and all the Mississippi River, above New Orleans, was in their hands again. Naturally enough, George's letters home are full of indignation at this state of things, for he feels sure that with energy and earnestness, and proper support from the government, this need never have happened, but that the river might have been cleared and a stop put to the rebel proceedings.

“OFF MOBILE, August 24, 1862.

“We have been from the Mississippi to Pensacola and back here, since I had a chance to send a letter. We stayed at Pensacola a week, and, as usual, I spent my spare time hunting and fishing. I have not had such a good chance for a long time, and there were quantities of game—wild turkeys, deer, all sorts of birds—in abundance.

“How long we shall blockade here I do not know. I wish they would make an attack soon, and I shall be glad when the war is over, anyway. I would rather fight for nothing and not touch my pay, and give up all I ever expect to possess, than make peace now, or until we conquer. The rebels act so like a set of spoiled children that it destroys all pity for them, and I do not care whether their property is confiscated, their negroes freed, or what is done to punish them.

“It gets very monotonous on the blockade, though sometimes the sails will appear quite often, and we will keep steam up all the time, and be on a continual chase.

“When we are lying off Mobile, the rebel boats come down and have a look at us, and we look at them, but there is to be no movement made towards the capture of Mobile for the present. Galveston has fallen into our hands without a struggle, and we are gradually getting all the forts on the Gulf. But Mobile is strongly fortified, and it will require iron-clads to accomplish anything in this bay. I am sure wooden vessels cannot do much. Buchanan has command of its naval defences, and is building a powerful iron-clad.” \*

“AUGUST 28, 1862.

“I have been on shore hunting, and shot two beeves. This sport is rather dangerous as guerillas are said to be plentiful, but it serves to vary our diet, and the dullness of blockade duty. There are very severe gales off this bay; ‘northers’ they are called; some of our blockading vessels have been almost destroyed by them. Our ship has escaped so far, but when these gales *do* come, they make lively work for all hands.

“I am very sorry to hear of Mrs. Gove’s sad loss.

\*This was the famous ram *Tennessee*, which George afterward captured with the *Chickasaw* in the battle of Mobile Bay.

Anything like that makes one realize the horrors of war. How dreadful it really is! And what sorrow and mourning it causes! Once I could never have imagined the awful destruction of property, and the recklessness and wickedness I have lived to see.

“This blockading duty is not very pleasant for an impatient man. We do not live very well, it is so hard to get provisions; so when I think I can venture to take the risk, I go ashore hunting, just to get something to eat.”

“OFF MOBILE, September 5, 1862.

“Yesterday I went hunting after wild cattle and had a hard time. My party consisted of two armed boats’ crews, and when we reached the shore, I sent two of my men ahead as scouts to look out for guerillas, and then we started for some game.

“After hunting all the morning and not seeing anything, I sent one boat off and took the other with a few men to go and pick up the scouts. We pulled a long way, but could not find them, and I was just turning about, when I saw a large drove of cattle on shore. We pulled up on the beach and four of us started to get a shot at them, but they caught sight of us and put for a swamp, and in we went after them. We all separated, too, thinking our chances for a shot would be better; but after chasing an hour we lost them, and ourselves as well; and not only could we not find each other, but we could not find the boat!

“We heard the ship firing for our return, and about the same time we discovered a rebel steamer quite near us, and then we thought we should certainly be found and taken prisoners. We did not dare to halloo for each other, nor make any signal to our vessel, which we could hear firing for us every few minutes. I knew the Captain must have some very good reason for being

so anxious, and I looked everywhere about quietly, trying to find my way; but no one was anywhere to be seen, and I came to the conclusion that they must all have been taken prisoners. I was bound that I would not be taken, so I hid myself in the woods until sunset, and then, after it was dusk, went down to the beach and signaled for a boat. When the boat came the men said there was great anxiety about us on board ship, for they felt sure the rebels had taken us prisoners. As soon as the boat and boat's crew came, I made signals and fired guns, for the three men who had gone after the cattle with me. To my great relief they soon made their appearance. They had been as badly scared as I was, and having come upon tracks of the enemy, had concluded that I must have been taken prisoner, and since then they had been hiding in the woods. Just about this time the boat that I had left, to go after the cattle, came along, and the scouts turned up, and we were all safe.

“The men whom I had left in charge of the boat had undertaken to beguile the time by a sail, and getting to leewards a strong breeze sprang up, and they could not return to land till it went down. But at last we were all right, and got back to the ship safe and sound, and there was great rejoicing over our return. The Captain had been very anxious about our fate, for he had seen the steamer and feared the rebels on board had seen and taken us. How can Hammie or Frank beat this for a hunting story?

“This afternoon we have had some more excitement. A large steamer made her appearance coming in from sea with the English colors set. Captain Preble of the *Oneida*, and Thornton of the *Winona*, blockading off this place, saw her, and both got under way, and the *Winona* stood for her; but Thornton soon decided that

it must be an English man-of-war, and therefore stood off after another sail, which hove in sight.

“Then what they thought was an English man-of-war came dashing up to the *Oncida*, near enough for them to see that she carried five guns on a side, and a pivot gun forward, and as she got abreast of the *Oncida*, Captain Preble fired a shot across her bows to bring her to; he supposed she brought some important news, and he would board her, as she was within our lines. But the steamer stood on, and as soon as she passed the *Oncida*, hauled down her English colors and made for the harbor. She was very fast, and the *Oncida*, having but one boiler in use, was unable to catch her; so she reached Mobile in safety, and, no doubt, carried to the rebels a valuable cargo of arms. It was a smart thing on the part of the rebel captain.

“We hear that Admiral Farragut is to be here the 10th of this month.”

“SEPTEMBER 12, 1862.

“The Admiral has not come yet; but since that English steamer ran the blockade here our fleet has been reinforced. We keep on the chase all the time after every sail that appears.

“News comes that the rebels are in force again near New Orleans. I cannot understand why our fleet is kept so inactive. A few gunboats, rightly handled, could have kept the Mississippi open from New Orleans to Vicksburg; but instead of being kept on such duty, they have been concentrated at ports, while the river has been easily retaken by the rebels, and there will be more hard fighting there yet.”

“SEPTEMBER 14, 1862.

“We have now seven gunboats here. This is getting to be a rendezvous for our men-of-war; but I do not know what they intend doing.

“My captain is so scary and anxious about everything, that I cannot go hunting much; but yesterday I got ashore and shot two of the wild cattle about the swamps, and that helps out our table a good deal.

“The only variety which we get nowadays, to the monotonous duty of blockading, is the awful wind, which blows a perfect gale here every few days, just at this season, and which does not make it any more agreeable.

“I think there is no hope of any attack on Mobile at present. Galveston, as you know, is in the enemy’s hands again, and Admiral Farragut has sent two boats to try and retake it. This ship is going to Pensacola, if it will stop blowing a gale long enough for us to start.

“I have been reading President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, and I like it very much. I see such actions among the rebels, that I think it high time the negroes were freed, and everything done to bring them to their senses. I believe without their negroes they would soon starve out.

“I wish I could have more frequent letters from home. I want to know all about Roger and Ham and Frank. Is old Charley fat and looking well?”

“PENSACOLA, September 28, 1862.

“At last I have received letters from home; but though they told me many things I wanted to know, yet they were quite old when they reached me, and I long for later news. You speak again of Mrs. Gove’s great sorrow, and I do not wonder you feel sympathy for her. This war is a cruel thing, and if it continues much longer there will be hardly a family anywhere that will not be in mourning. I wish it would be over for one reason—I do so long to get home. Home is



always so pleasant to me, and I love to help make it so.

“It is lucky we came here just as we did, for the gunboats that came over a few days after us encountered a terrible gale and were much damaged, one of them coming in in a sinking condition.

“We have been having a good deal of fuss about the fight between the *Essex* and a rebel ram. The *Essex* fired some shots at the ram, and her officers set her on fire and she burned up. We were within sight at the time, but Captain Fairfax did not think it necessary to participate. He is a very anxious captain, feeling his responsibility greatly, but he is brave enough. The captain of the *Essex*, though, wishes to make out that he had a desperate fight with the ram, and says that we were so scared we ran away.

“This, of course, has made Captain Fairfax indignant, and he has demanded a court of inquiry. I must say that although we did not take any part in what fight there was, yet the captain of the *Essex* had no right to say what he did. We shall return from here to the Mobile blockade.”

“OFF MOBILE, October 4, 1862.

“I have just got a chance to send home a line by ship *Island*, and I am going to write something, though my monotonous life does not give me a word worth saying, for we cruise about every day—but we see nothing.

“Buchanan is hard at work inside Mobile harbor, and has four very good gunboats, besides an iron-clad.

“I am getting to be an ‘old’ lieutenant now, and will soon be ordered first lieutenant of a larger ship than this.

“News comes that Captain Preble has been dis-

missed for letting that English steamer run the blockade.

“I wish they would make the attack here and have it over. I believe that a few iron-clads could pass these forts successfully ; and if we had some iron-clads, we could dispense with this large fleet of wooden vessels.

“Don’t forget when you write to tell me every little thing—even the last new thing Poll has learned to say. The letters come so irregularly and I have so much time to think of home, that I am always fancying something happening there, and I want to know everything.”

“OCTOBER 12, 1862.

“Since Captain Preble’s dismissal, the blockade has tried to be very vigilant, but for all that two large steamers loaded with cotton—the *Cuba* and the *Alice*—ran through in the night-time and got clear. Everybody is sorry for Captain Preble, and hopes he will get back, for he has been in the navy all his life—has a family, and nothing but his pay.

“The weather has changed and is cold enough for New Hampshire, and my fingers are so numb I can hardly write. We are lying now very near Mobile Bay—just beyond the range of the forts. The rebel steamers come out and have a look at us, and positively it seems strange that they are our enemies. But if I do not realize it now, probably I shall some day ; perhaps before the winter is over.

“We do not get much that is good to eat, and fresh provisions come along irregularly, and only last about three days.”

“OCTOBER 18, 1862.

“We are now under orders to go to New Orleans where Captain Fairfax will meet the court of inquiry

he has demanded about the affair between the *Essex* and the rebel ram. I do not like the idea of being a witness in such matters. It makes me feel cross, too, that our commodore does not keep up the blockade more strictly. Two steamers and seven schooners have run through the last month, and it is a shame. I wonder if the reason Farragut does not keep stricter discipline in the fleet, is because the government does not sustain his attempts heartily?

“Do not repeat any of my remarks on the conduct of officers, or on any naval matters.

“As soon as we take Mobile, all the hard fighting will be over. If they would only send two or three iron-clads here, I believe the place could be taken easily, and with small loss; but if we attempt it with our wooden vessels we shall have a hard time.

“Every now and then I hear of some friends of mine being killed. Only the other day Swasey, first lieutenant of the *Kinco*, was shot by guerillas. It makes me impatient to have this war over before more valuable lives are sacrificed, and it ought not to last much longer. We just lie here doing nothing but look at Fort Morgan, which is about four miles off.”

“NEW ORLEANS, November 2, 1862.

“We arrived here from Pensacola and went up the river at once to attack some rebel gunboats, but we could not find them. We went up as far as Baton Rouge, but were not molested by anything except the sharpshooters on the levee, but we did not lose any men.

“I have just received my orders to report to Commodore Morris for duty as executive officer on board the *Pensacola*. She is one of the finest vessels in the navy, carries a battery of twenty-six large guns, and has

about four hundred men. It is quite a promotion for me, though I shall have to work hard.

“The *Pensacola* will remain here this winter to protect the city, and you must direct all your letters here. Captain Fairfax has spoken very highly of me to every one, and he does not want me to leave him; but he must soon make a change, and this is a good position for me.

“There is a good deal of rascality going on in this city. One sees a great deal of depravity and a total disregard of all moral obligations. I do not think the volunteer officers conduct themselves very creditably. So far as attending to their duty and behaving in any sort of a straightforward, honorable manner, the navy officers are way ahead; at least, they do not try to make money out of the war, but they live on their small salaries and try to serve their country.

“XMAS, 1862.

“I stayed on board ship all day, and, as I soon fell to thinking about you all at home, I had quite a fit of homesickness. So I am going to begin a letter, though, as usual, I have little to write about except myself.

“Commodore Morris is an old fellow and ranks next to the Admiral. He lets me have my own way in everything, and I have nothing to complain of; but I have a great deal to do. Many of the officers are a great deal older than I, and I have to appear dignified and old, and often hard and stern. I do not especially like that. I hope you are all having a pleasant Christmas at home to-day.”

“DECEMBER 28, 1862.

“I am feeling very sadly about the death of Blodgett, my dear old friend and classmate. The news has just

come. He was one of the finest young officers in the navy, and was full of noble qualities. He has been in command of one of Porter's fleet up the river, and in some way caught a fever and died of it. I mourn him very much.

"Lieutenant Terry of the *Richmond*, who is another dear friend of mine, is in very poor health from exposure and the effects of the climate. He is in port just now, and is much company for me. I wish you knew him, for he is a fine fellow, and you could not help liking him."

"JANUARY 12, 1863.

"A request for assistance has come from the boats up the river. Just think! At one time we held four hundred miles above this city, and now we only hold one hundred and thirty, and we shall have a hard fight to keep that.

"I cannot help wishing I could have taken this ship into action. My place now is not a very dangerous one, unless they blow up the ship with torpedoes. They tried it once, but did not succeed. There is a large fleet here now, and all hands are having a good time. I should think we had better be put at work bringing this war to an end. It is not the Admiral's fault. They keep him in check at the department, otherwise he would have had Mobile and all the Mississippi River by this time."

"JANUARY 18, 1863.

"We have been very unfortunate in the Gulf lately. Lost Galveston, and lost some of our finest officers at Berwick's Bay. Buchanan was buried here to-day, and I have just come from his funeral, which was a very large one. He was beloved by everybody. The killing of Lieutenant Lea on the *Harriet Lane* was a very dis-

troubling affair. A letter from him came to me two days after he was shot. His father was a major in the rebel army, and was in the engagement in which his son was killed. And now comes the news of the sinking of the *Hatteras* by the *Alabama*, which is another sad affair. All of her officers are either killed, made prisoners, or sunk with the vessel. Things look very shaky, and there seems no head nor tail either in the army or navy. Spies here come and go at will, and the chief and worst ones are ladies of the best families. They take the oath of allegiance, and ask permission to pass our lines for the purpose of getting a few supplies for their children, who, they say, are starving; but when once through, they get everything they can sew up in their skirts—quinine and everything else—and their supply comes from *our* army stores. They get it, no matter if it is contraband of war. One lady boasted that she wanted nothing more within our lines; that she had carried through over two hundred ounces of quinine within the last week.

“Mrs. General Dudley is a very pleasant lady, whose husband is stationed here, and I have enjoyed seeing her very much during the holidays. She knows Mrs. Gove very well and has visited her in Concord, and that gives us something to talk about. Still I do not enjoy going about much, for I get quite stirred up and out of temper at the irritating and annoying things which I know the rebels are doing, and which a little energy on our part might put a stop to.

“The *Alabama* is hanging around, picking off our merchant ships and those that are laden with government stores, but she gets safely off by the time any of our ships are sent after her. I feel about it in such a way that if I am invited anywhere I either decline or go in my uniform, for that is a protection against

remarks of a political character. It is 'fashionable' among the gay people here to be 'secesh,' and talk of that sort is not agreeable to a Northern officer; but I receive such a number of invitations that I should think I must be invited to everything and everywhere.

"I am sorry to learn from your last letter that Mrs. Jewell has lost her little daughter. I can remember what a pretty child she was and how much her mother was wrapt up in her, and I am very sorry for her. I feel sad and sober myself all the time, for since so many of my friends have been killed in this war, and I have seen so much cruelty and treachery among the rebels, I get very bitter in my feelings.

"Think how many noble young lives and beautiful characters have been sacrificed to their vanity and wickedness and miserable ambition! Many of their actions that I know of are enough to destroy all mercy in any human heart, and I sometimes long to be in battle, and I feel that every shot fired from this ship will be aimed with a good will and an earnest desire to slaughter them and remove such creatures from the earth.

"I dare say this may sound bloodthirsty, but there are times when I cannot help such feelings, after what I see and know of things the rebels are continually doing. I feel more than willing to fight and lose my life if it will only bring this war to an end. I do not fear death, and if it were not for you at home and the thought that my life is and will be something to you, I should positively *rather* die if it would secure the success of the cause, for which I am fighting. I feel pretty sure now that I shall not be found wanting in readiness to take the fortunes of war.

"As you like to know all the compliments that are paid me, I will tell you one that I had the other day

from General Weitzel. He wants me to take command of a fleet of gunboats in Berwick Bay. He is getting up an expedition of ten thousand men and a fleet of gunboats to go up through the bayous into Red River, and he wants me to take command of the naval force. He said to me,—‘Perkins, you are the only man that I know of fitted to go through the desperate fighting we shall have; but with you in command of those gunboats and me with my troops, we can face the devil, and are bound to win. But unless you will go with me, I have my doubts about succeeding, and I shall think twice before I go.’

“We are soon to have a fight at Port Hudson, and the *Pensacola* is to form part of the attacking fleet, and if I come out of that all right, I shall certainly go with Weitzel; but Commodore Morris wants me to stay with him for the present, and he has been so kind to me, I shall do what I can to please him.

“A rebel quartermaster has just been caught with a list of the articles he intended to purchase within our lines of *our* sutlers, though to be sure he had taken the oath of allegiance! He will probably be imprisoned a few days and then let out, when he will at once go back to the same rascally business, and we shall go on furnishing the rebel army and people with food and medicines. It makes me fairly vexed and unhappy to see the United States and its government and its soldiers, so scoffed and cheated and jeered at by the rebels.

“But I will not say any more now about the war, for it does no good, and I had much better turn to a pleasanter subject, which is yourself, dear mother. I have been hearing some very complimentary things about your beauty and charms, in your youth. A few days ago I was invited to a dinner party given to General Dudley and his wife by a Mr. Malony. After the din-



ner, which was a very good one, he asked me if I was the son of Hamilton Perkins of Hopkinton. When I told him I was, he said, 'Your father married Clara George, the belle of New England!' Then he went on to tell me all about you in your younger days, and what 'wonderful sparkling black eyes' you had, etc. He talked about your father and about Uncle Paul and Uncle John, and old times in Concord generally, for nearly three hours, and I never was better entertained. My next gayety is to be a party up the river. We are going to visit a large sugar plantation which has quite a reputation; but that will wind up my visiting, as I ought not to leave the ship much, for Commodore Morris is growing more feeble, and I do not believe he can hold out much longer. I hope the captain who takes his place will be as fine an officer and gentleman as he is.

"It would do you good to see the *Pensacola* now. She is one of the finest ships in the navy, and by having my own way, I have got her in splendid order, and the crew perfectly drilled."

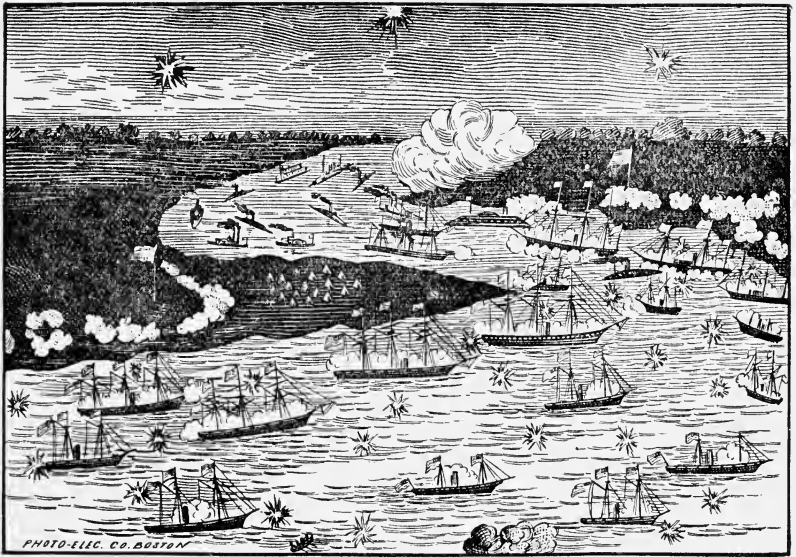
"MARCH 1, 1863.

"The other morning I received orders from the Admiral to take command of the *Cayuga* and go to Galveston to assist in retaking it. I was delighted with the orders, for I hate to lie here inactive, and I made all haste to be off to her; but when the mail steamer arrived, whom should it bring but Captain McDerrit, who had been ordered at the department to relieve Captain Fairfax as her commander, and my hopes are dashed.

"My chief source of happiness, in being stationed at New Orleans, is the regularity with which I get letters from home, they are such a comfort to me.

"The attack on Port Hudson is given up for the

present. The enemy have concentrated such a large force there that any fight would be attended with great loss, and we should run a great risk of getting whipped. This city is threatened too, and the rebels are in high glee. If the first conquests up the river, after the taking of New Orleans, had been sustained by our government, all the blood which has since been shed, and all that must flow to recapture it, might have been saved."



THE FLEET PASSING FORTS JACKSON AND ST. PHILIP.

“NEW ORLEANS, April 21, 1863.

“I spent last evening with a Mrs. Kimball, a very agreeable woman, and a great friend of Mrs. James Thornton’s, who lived in Concord at one time. That made her seem a little nearer something at home than other people.

“I have sent to Frank by the last steamer two guns. The six-pounder is a fine gun, and was captured after a desperate fight. The other is a rifle gun, and is quite a curiosity; it will throw a ball a long way.

“The *Naval Register* states that I have been a lieutenant commander since December 13, 1862, but I have not received any notification of it from the department.

“Money is being made out here, hand over hand, much of it in a dishonest way. It makes me mad and sad at the same time to see these rascally quartermasters lying back in luxury, and never being exposed to danger, while those who do all the hard work and fighting, and endure all the discomforts of the war, get neither honor nor money.

“Photographs have come out of our ships passing Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and I have enclosed you one. Please keep it.

“I hear now that I am ordered to take command of the Berwick Bay fleet with the steamer *Arizona* for my vessel. She is much larger than the *Cayuga*, and of a different class of ships, and it will be a high promotion for me. I hardly think, though, that the chief officers feel ambition enough to organize the expedition.”

“JUNE 4, 1863.

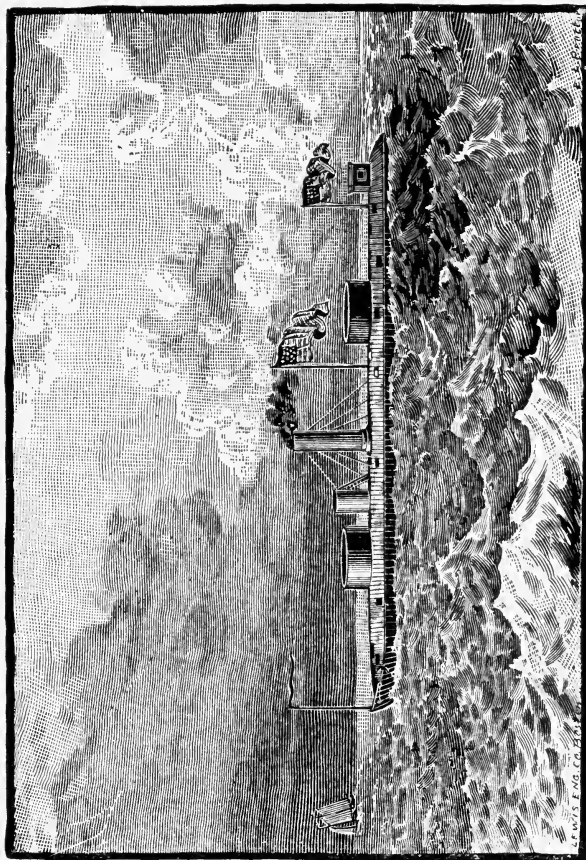
“Well, Berwick Bay has been captured by the rebels since I sent my last—just as we were beginning to think about defending it. Our soldiers are discouraged, and twelve hundred of them surrendered to six hundred of the enemy. All the senior officers were away ‘speculating,’ probably, which is a mild term for it, and there was nobody in command but a major, and he was badly scared. Our fine new guns are being captured by the rebels, and the day after they are taken they will be

mounted on the levee and trained on us. It is too disgraceful! I am now offered the command of the steamer *Tennessee*; she is a fine ship, but I cannot yet decide."

The last of June, 1863, General Banks, who was then in command of the forces besieging Port Hudson, sent word to Admiral Farragut that he must have more powder, or the siege could not be prosecuted. The Admiral therefore ordered the gunboat *New London* to be detailed to carry powder to our forces; and as her regular captain had not arrived, he gave the command to George. It was very dangerous duty, as there were batteries all the way, including a very powerful one at Whitehall's Point, and the explosive nature of the *New London's* cargo put her at the mercy even of a sharpshooter. George's first trip is described in a letter dated

"JULY 4, 1863.

"I am on my way down the river, and shall soon be in New Orleans. I have taken command of this vessel until her captain comes from Mobile; but after that I expect to go back to the *Pensacola*. My duty is to convey powder to Banks's army. I left New Orleans in the evening, convoying the steamer *North America* as far as Donaldsonville. The river is now in possession of the rebels, and they fire on all our vessels and destroy our transports. I have been up all night, and have had a hard and lively time. Within two miles of Donaldsonville a rebel battery opened on us with artillery and sharpshooters. We were struck several times and had quite a spirited engagement. I got the *North America* by all right, with only four shots through her, and then leaving her at Donaldsonville I returned to the scene of action, and kept it up till they stopped fir-



THE CHICKASAW.



ing. On my way down I trained my guns on everything I could see, as I was determined to make them pay dear for their whistle this time; but the levee is so high that one is not able to see anything behind it, and the rebels mass their sharpshooters at different points and fire into our gunboats when they pass; and, although we blaze away back, we do not get a fair revenge. In fact, the rebels are now doing pretty much as they please everywhere. They go and come, freely, in and out of New Orleans, and all our affairs are in a confused and disorganized state."

.. JULY 29, 1863.

"Since I wrote you last I have been through more excitement, and it seems to me as if I had been in more danger, than ever before in my life; and I am going to try and describe to you my last trip in the *New London*.

"I had passed the Whitehall Point batteries in her successfully five times, but on the sixth trip, when the *New London* was returning to New Orleans, just as she was passing those batteries, at about quarter past one, on the morning of the 20th of July, the enemy discovered her, and opened with artillery and sharpshooters. One shot struck the *New London's* boiler, which exploded, severely scalding six men, and another shot penetrated the steam drum. This disabled the vessel, and I ordered her to be run towards the eastern bank, but the escaping steam made it impossible for the helmsman to remain at the wheel, and the ship grounded within range of the battery. The gunboat *Winona*, which had been ordered to escort the *New London* past Whitehall Point, ran away at the first shot, and was out of sight by this time. I fired rockets to inform her of my danger and to summon her to my assistance, but received no response.

“We were at the mercy of the sharpshooters, and every shot dealt death and destruction. My first lieutenant was shot through the head, and the men now became so terrified that they began to leap overboard. I then ordered a boat to be manned and kedged off the ship astern, till she drifted down stream out of the way of the upper battery. But the most powerful fortification of the battery was still below us; so I towed the ship to the eastern bank and made her fast; but danger pursued me here, and it was soon plain that I had only gained a respite from the murderous fire, for I could see the enemy cutting embrasures to move their guns down for a better range, and I knew that daylight would seal the fate of my ship and crew.

“I determined to save them if I could. I sent the ship’s company ashore under the protection of the levee, where they could use their muskets to repel an attack, and stationed pickets along the road. I then despatched messengers by land to Donaldsonville, where General Weitzel was, for assistance, and sent a boat by the river to the *Monongahela* and *Essex* with the same request. These two ships were stationed some miles below on the river to protect an encampment of our troops on the eastern bank.

“The messengers returned from Donaldsonville saying no assistance could be rendered; while, with regard to the success of those I sent by the river I felt very doubtful, so much was the passage of the Whitehall Point batteries dreaded. Just at this time information was brought me that a force of rebel cavalry—five hundred strong—was only a few miles in the interior. I felt desperate, for I realized the whole peril of the situation, and I was determined that my ship and crew should not fall into the hands of the enemy. I resolved to follow the dictates of my own judgment. I knew that upon



a personal application Weitzel would at once grant me anything I wanted. I went ashore, and capturing a horse that was tied to a fence, I rode back to Donaldsonville. Arrived opposite, I signaled to the *Princess Royal* to send a boat for me, and, to save time, I first demanded assistance from her senior officer; this he thought fit to refuse.

“The *Princess Royal* was one of our gunboats stationed at Donaldsonville to protect and help Weitzel. I immediately hastened to him, and without delay he started a body of troops down the river for my assistance. But when I returned to the spot where I had left the *New London* I found her gone, and I concluded—rightly, as it afterwards proved—that the boat I had sent early in the morning had succeeded in reaching our ships, and that they had come up and taken her off. I found afterwards that it was the iron-clad *Essex*, and it towed her directly to New Orleans.

“This was a great relief to me, for now the lives of my men were safe, and the ship was still under its own flag; but I began to realize that my own position was now one of considerable danger. I fastened the horse I had so unceremoniously borrowed to the spot I first found him, and then hired a negro to drive me, in any sort of vehicle he could get, down the levee road to our lines. This proved to be a carryall harnessed to a mule; but it was the best he could do. I took the back seat, and laid my loaded pistols by my side close under my hand. At the negro’s earnest entreaty I put on my uniform coat wrong side out, that it might not attract attention, and so I started—a Union officer, miles from our troops—on my passage through the enemy’s country, along a road where rebel troops, bands of guerillas, and sharpshooters were usually in constant movement. Yet by some rare fortune it happened, just at this time,

that my chief danger—except the overhanging peril of the whole situation—was not incurred until I approached our lines, except that around a grocery shop which I passed there were lounging a group of armed rebels. My driver was terribly frightened at this, and kept saying, ‘Set back, massa, for God’s sake, set back! Mebbe dey won’t see you!’ And then whipped up his mule till we were safe beyond their reach.

“But I had been seen and suspected by the rebel troops on the other side of the river, and they had sent a boat and some soldiers across to capture me. They reached the bank on my side, landed, and came up the road to intercept me just as I was nearing our lines. Fortunately all this was perceived by our troops, and a body of cavalry was sent out, which captured the rebels and conducted me in safety to the camp by one and the same proceeding. Here I found one of our ships—the *Monongahela*—and I went on board of her in a perfectly exhausted condition. Flinging myself in a bunk I slept soundly for hours, undisturbed by the fact that a short time before, while lying in that very same place, the captain of the *Monongahela*—Abner Read—had been killed by a rebel shot which penetrated the ship’s side and struck him, and that his dead body was then on board, being conveyed to New Orleans.

“I roused myself very early next morning in order to continue my journey to New Orleans in a commissary wagon, but when daylight dawned I saw a gunboat coming down the river in command of my friend Captain Cooke, and I went on board of her and made the rest of my trip by water.”

George always regarded his escape during this trip as little short of a miracle. Soon after an army officer, with a heavy escort of cavalry, went over the same

road which George traversed alone, and this officer was lauded to the skies in the newspapers of the day for his "display of reckless daring."

Arrived in New Orleans, George reported to Farragut, who, although not wholly endorsing his course, complimented him in conversation on his bravery, and promised to give him the best command that was vacant. I copy the official papers connected with this affair :

"SIR: You will, upon the reporting of Lieutenant Commander Potter, deliver over the command of the *New London* to that officer, and consider yourself detached from that vessel. You will then report to Commodore Morris for duty on board the U. S. S. *Pensacola*. I regret this necessity, but seniority must have its precedence, and it is for no misconduct that you are relieved. I am satisfied that you acted to the best of your judgment in the case of the disabling of the *New London*.

"Respectfully,

"D. G. FARRAGUT, *Rear Admiral*.

"Lieutenant Commander,

"GEORGE H. PERKINS."

Admiral Farragut endorsed his report to the department as follows :

"Lieutenant Commander Perkins was temporarily in command of the *New London*, and was sent up the river. His conduct was represented as cool. He made every disposition of his men and managed his vessel with ability ; but although he procured the assistance he sought, I informed him the principle was wrong ; but it could be looked upon only as an error of judgment."

George, however, refuses to believe that the circumstances did not warrant his action, as, after sending for help and doing all that was possible, there was no way remaining by which his vessel and the lives of his men could be saved but the one he chose. He also considers his experience in connection with the *New London* as the most perilous of any in all his varied and adventurous life, and asserts that he was more helpless against the surrounding dangers there than even at the battles of New Orleans and Mobile. To return to his letters :

“NEW ORLEANS, July 31, 1863.

“The Admiral has given me command of the *Sciota*. She is a fine gunboat and a good command for me. He promised me a good command when I was relieved from the *New London*, and he has kept his word. Commodore Morris left the *Pensacola* this afternoon. The old gentleman felt very sad, and so did we, for we all loved him very much. He was so feeble that he had to be lowered over the side in a chair, and I am afraid he will not live to get home.

“The *Sciota* will lie off this city about a month. She is a regular naval gunboat, and carries four twenty-four pound howitzers, one eleven-inch gun, and one Parrott gun, and her officers and crew number one hundred and fifteen men, all told.

“Tell Uncle Paul that I am the youngest officer at this time that has such a command. I expect my destination is to be blockade duty somewhere off Galveston, Texas.”

George's blockading experiences, which continued for the next eight months, proved, as a general thing, very quiet, and it gave his thoughts more time than usual to dwell on his home. Its interests are again his constant theme and the occupations and prospects of

all his family. Many fathers are not so anxious about their sons as was George at this time for his younger brothers. All his letters were full of plans for them and advice to them. After his long absence and widely differing occupation, the clearness and intensity with which he enters into home matters is remarkable.

The brother who was next to George in years—Roger Eliot—had, when quite young, gone into business with a relative in Cincinnati, but about the second year of the war, the elder member of the firm being obliged to discontinue business on account of his health, this was given up, and Roger returned home. He intended in some way to identify himself with the war in its progress, but George was so unwilling that he should put himself in any position where his life would be endangered or his future prospects unsettled, that Roger finally decided to study medicine, a plan which met with George's cordial approbation. In this same year of 1863, the next younger brother—Hamilton—was appointed to the naval academy, an appointment which gratified the dearest wish of his heart. The youngest brother—Frank—was now about fifteen years of age, very promising in every way, and George would plan that this one should be the "home boy, going into business in Concord to be near the family."

It is sad and touching now to read George's letters of those days, with their eager hopes and plans. Two of the brothers, about whose future he was so earnest, passed in the brightness and freshness of their youth beyond all earthly joys and fears—God made their future safe by taking them to himself.

Roger, after going through the proper course, graduated at the Harvard Medical School, and late in the autumn of 1866 went to St. Louis to establish himself; but falling a victim to the typhoid fever, which raged

there that winter, died, away from home, February 6, 1867, aged twenty-six. Just six months before, Frank died at home, after a short and sudden illness, June 25, 1866, at the age of nineteen.

The following passage from one of George's letters gives a pretty good summary of his life during the winter of 1863 and 1864:

"I do nothing but read and build castles in the air, for no sails appear within the lines of coast allotted to me. Once in three weeks the steamer comes along with our letters and provisions—fresh meat, potatoes, and onions. Once or twice I have ventured on shore, but it is very risky, and the last time I was so nearly captured that it is a wonder now that I am not either shot or a prisoner of war. I would go ashore, just for a change, and, being unknown, would venture into the towns and villages, buying something at the stores and looking about a little, and even made some friends who did not know my name; but the last time that I tried this a man said to me, 'I know you; you are the captain of that Yankee gunboat that blockades off here.' Some one with whom I had been sociable contradicted him. A crowd began to gather, and while they were disputing who I was, I hurried to my boat, hidden in a cove, but not before they had started in pursuit of me and got pretty close, too. I was well frightened, for if I had not got away, it would have been an awful scrape, even if my life had been saved.

"We have had a steady gale of wind which has blown for weeks without cessation, and the ship has done nothing but roll, roll, roll, all the time, and we are perfectly tired out."

"APRIL 5, 1864.

"I caught a prize last night. It was the schooner

*Mary Sorley*, loaded with cotton. She was formerly the U. S. revenue cutter here, and was loaded with two hundred and fifty-seven bales of cotton. I have sent her to New Orleans to be adjudicated, and if she arrives there all safe, she will be sold, and bring me in a nice little sum of money ; and you must look out for it if anything happens to me. A good many officers have made prize-money during the war, but I have not had any luck before this. I am going now to lie off Brazos. The forts there are old friends of mine ; we are everlastingly peppering each other, but so far with no results."

"OFF SABINE PASS, TEXAS, JUNE 12, 1864.

"The *Circassian* to-day brought me only one letter from my home, and did not bring me my relief. He has been ordered some time, and I fully expected him in this steamer. I find waiting for him a very tantalizing business, and I fall back on thinking that whatever happens, I certainly shall not be left here all summer.

"Just think how *long* it is since I have been at home, and what changes there have been ! Aunt Anne dead, and now Uncle Paul, both of whom have been so much a part of our lives. They were always so kind to me, and so interested in me, I shall miss them very much. It seems like a living death to be on the blockade. When the *Circassian*, which is here now, goes, it will be twenty days before we see another sail. We get all talked out on board ship, and sometimes a week passes and I do not speak a word, except those which my duty requires. There is very little variety on my blockade, though it is quite an extensive one, stretching from Port Cavallo to Sabine Pass, and now it is past time for my relief to come and I feel very impatient.

“One would think I might grow fat leading such a quiet life, but I stick at the old notch where I have been for five years, and only weigh one hundred and fifteen pounds.”

George's relief, which was ordered the 20th of April, did not reach him till the last of June. George was given leave of absence, but on arriving at New Orleans, intending to take the first steamer for the North, he found preparations going on for the battle of Mobile. At once, giving up all thought of going home, he offered his services to Admiral Farragut, who gladly accepted them, and appointed him to the command of the iron-clad *Chickasaw*, which had just arrived at New Orleans from St. Louis, and was a new and untried monitor.

The attacking force at Mobile was to include four iron-clads, and indispensable as these had been proved for any naval movement, yet the government furnished them to Admiral Farragut with great delay and apparent reluctance; or, as Commander Mahan says in his recent book entitled “Our Navy in the Gulf and Inland Waters during the Civil War,” “after many askings and months of delay.”

As one reads the history of those times, it is impossible to understand what could have influenced our government to proceed at such a cost of life and treasure. The need of iron-clads had been declared by the foremost and most experienced officers of the navy; notably by Admiral Bailey, in all his speeches and remarks after the battle of New Orleans. The rebels early recognized their usefulness, and not only availed themselves of all means of possessing them, but strove to keep us in terror by circulating reports of those they claimed to have received from England. It was sometimes said that the older officers in our service preferred



wooden vessels. But there seems no proof of this, certainly not after the victory of the *Monitor* in Hampton Roads. Two years before the battle of Mobile, when George lay off that bay blockading, he often wrote of what he would like to do if he only had "command of an iron-clad," and every fighting officer had been asserting for a long time the folly of making attacks with wooden vessels.

In a report made January 20, 1864, Admiral Farragut says, immediately after a reconnoissance of Mobile Bay :

"Without iron-clads we should not be able to fight the enemy's vessels of that class with much prospect of success, as the latter could lie in the flats where our ships could not go to destroy them. Wooden vessels can do nothing with them, unless by getting within one hundred or two hundred yards, so as to ram them or pour in a broadside."

Early in May the *Tennessee*, having been floated over Dog River Bar, appeared in full view of the blockading fleet, and the Admiral reports to the department :

"I fear it will be much more difficult to take Mobile than it would have been one week ago."

At last the department put at the disposal of Admiral Farragut four iron-clads. Two—the *Tecumseh* and the *Manhattan*—were sent him from the Atlantic coast, and two—the *Chickasaw* and the *Winnebago*—from the Mississippi river.

These last two were built at St. Louis by Mr. Eads, and there was great doubt expressed as to their being either suitable or serviceable. It was even thought that they might not be able to make the voyage from New Orleans to Mobile. Mr. Eads, however, war-

ranted them to the government, and declared that they were certain to do good service if properly handled, and that, in fact, if they did not prove to be all that he claimed, he would bear the expenses incurred by their trial.

These monitors were built after favorite plans of Mr. Eads, were of light draught, and could be used in rivers. After the battle of Mobile Bay, Mr. Eads published in the St. Louis *Democrat* an article entitled "A Chapter in History," written in defence of these iron-clads, where he relates his conversation with Secretary Welles and Assistant Secretary Fox. He was very indignant at the declaration of Admiral Porter that "these vessels would break to pieces in the least swell," and he denied it as an "utter falsehood;" while as an evidence of his sincerity, and of his confidence in them, he promptly offered that if the secretary would send them to Mobile, he would replace them at his own individual cost, if they should be lost in any ordinary weather in their passage through the Gulf. The article concludes:

"The result of the presence of Mr. Eads's monitors in Mobile has passed into history, and the statement of Admiral Porter can be compared with the fact that the powerful and almost invulnerable *Tennessee* was mainly whipped by the *Chickasaw* in the memorable fight on the fifth of August."

Of the four iron-clads that went into that battle, the *Chickasaw* was the only one that remained in perfect condition throughout the fight. The *Tecumseh* was blown up in the beginning by a torpedo, the *Manhattan* (Captain Nicholson) lost the use of one of her guns by the dropping of a fragment of iron into the vent, and as it could not be got out, she was able to fire but six of her heavy shot during the entire action. The turrets

of the *Winnebago* were out of order and could not revolve, forcing her to "yaw," in seaman phrase;—that is, to turn completely round whenever she fired. Or as Commander Mahan says: "The guns could only be trained by moving the helm, and her fire was necessarily slow."

The *Chickasaw* entered the conflict in perfect condition. George had, by untiring effort, made her, and everything and everybody on board of her, as thoroughly prepared as was possible for human foresight and human endeavor. He examined, improved, and tested everything up to the last moment before the battle, and the result was that not only did she endure the strain of firing fifty-two solid shot on the morning of the 5th of August with, as has been said, "the precision and rapidity of pocket pistols;" but that afternoon she bombarded Fort Powell, and the next day Fort Gaines, and was engaged twenty-four hours in succession in the reduction of Fort Morgan.

George writes from New Orleans as follows:

"JULY 22, 1864.

"I arrived here from Texas a few days ago, and have taken command of a large double-turreted monitor named the *Chickasaw*. I volunteered to take command of her during the fight, which is to come off so soon at Mobile. I hope I shall be successful and come out all right. I shall write you again in a few days, or as soon as I get off Mobile—anyway, by the time you receive this the action will be over."

The letter continues with directions about clothes and other things he has sent home, and finishes:

"I have not time to accept any of the many invitations I receive. I have not even time to write, but will write a long letter to mother as soon as I can. She

must not worry about me. I hope everything will come out for the best. Life is not very long anyway, and I am not afraid to die. I should only dread leaving you all at home."

"JULY 27, 1864.

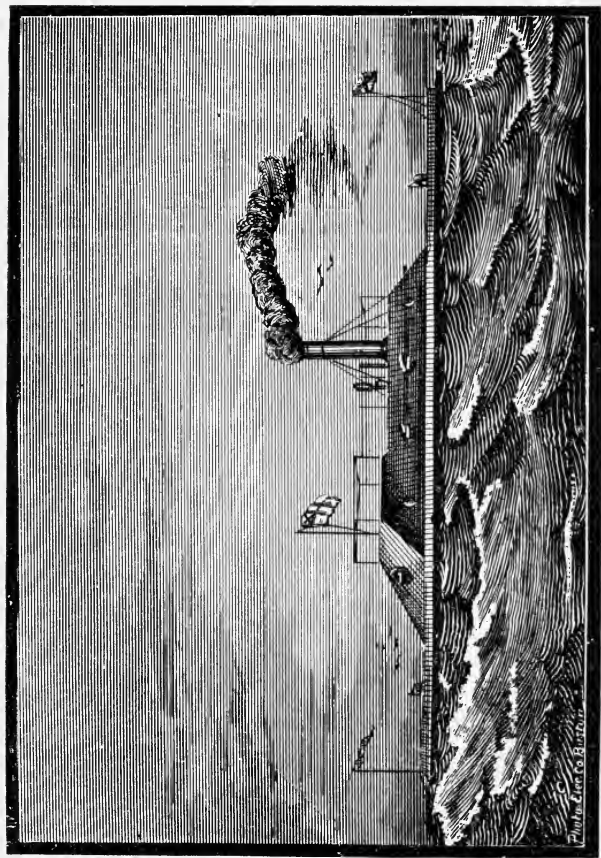
"MY DEAR MOTHER :

"I shall go to sea to-morrow night, and as soon as the iron-clads arrive off Mobile the fight will come off. I have a large command for my rank—a crew of one hundred and forty-five men and twenty-five officers. She carries four eleven-inch guns and has two turrets, and you can judge of her power by the fact that it requires fifteen engines to work her.

"I am very busy, and am writing at this moment among a lot of mechanics, who are working as fast as they can to get the ship in order. There is so much noise, and there is so much to be done, that I can hardly *think*. The cabin is so hot that I cannot stay in it. When we are under steam the thermometer, below decks, goes up to 150°, and in the engine-room to 214°. You have heard of the man who lived in an oven! Well, the cabin of a monitor does not leave much for the imagination to do in considering his case. I am hurrying everything all I can, and live in the midst of confusion.

"I hope to come home after the fight, as I only volunteered for that fight; but everything will be for the best whichever way it turns.

"I shall write you at sea on my way to Mobile. Everything will be over before you receive the letters, and I only hope you will not be worrying yourself about me, but look at the bright side, and believe I shall come out safe. I should liked to have seen you once more before this fight. Remember if I get killed it will be an honorable death, and the thought should partly take away your sorrow."



REBEL RAM TENNESSEE, CAPTURED AUGUST 5TH, 1864, BY U. S. S. CHICKASAW.

Copy of Photograph presented to Capt. George H. Perkins, by John A. McDonald, Gunner.



When the *Chickasaw* had left New Orleans, and was on its way down the Mississippi, an incident occurred which well illustrated the saying, that "safety is the price of eternal vigilance."

As the ship approached the bar, George was called away from the pilot-house to attend to some other duty; but a sudden suspicion causing him shortly to look around, he saw that the pilot had changed her course, and was heading for a wreck close aboard. To strike this would have sunk her. George sprang back to the pilot-house, and seizing the wheel turned the ship in the right direction; then drawing his pistol, he told the pilot, whom he was now convinced was a traitor, that if the ship touched ground, or anything else, he would blow his brains out. The pilot was very much frightened and said that the bottom of the river was lumpy and that the best of pilots were liable to touch sometime; but George told him to take his choice between trying to serve the Confederacy, and saving his life, for if the ship touched a single lump, he would shoot him. Needless to say that the ship's further course out of the river was uninterrupted.\*

"OFF MOBILE BAY, August 2, 1864.

"MY DEAR MOTHER :

"I arrived here yesterday from New Orleans, and am now anchored in company with the *Manhattan*, an iron-clad, and the *Winnebago*, which is the same kind of a vessel as mine. The *Chickasaw* looks just like the back of a great turtle, 257 feet long and 57 feet broad. I wish you could see her. We are about a mile and a half from Fort Morgan. The wooden vessels cannot come so near, as this is within easy range of the enemy's guns.

\* This story is well told in Captain Belknap's sketch of my brother, published in the *Bay State Monthly* of April, 1884.

“The Admiral visited me yesterday and inspected this ship. He has paid me a great compliment by giving me the command of her, for all the other iron-clads have old captains for their commanders. It will be a ‘feather in my cap’ if I come out all right; but don’t forget that ‘*if*.’

“I have been very, *very* hard at work getting ready for the fight, which comes off in two days now. It is expected to be a very desperate one, though I feel no doubt but that we shall have the victory.

“I am very tired and cannot write to you as I would wish; but, my dear mother, I think of you nearly all the time, and I know I have done as you would wish me to. I have seen almost enough of life, and I only care to live for you all at home. Life is but a dream anyway, and we cannot always live; so whatever happens, it will no doubt be for the best.

“You must look out for my prize-money. I shall try and leave a few lines for you just before the action, and if anything happens to me they will be sent you.”

“AUGUST 4, 1864.

“This vessel is so hot that we are obliged to sleep on deck; and I am a little used up. I left a box of clothes and other things on board the *Bermuda*. Should you not get them in course of time, write for them to Capt. Jerry Smith. I will also drop him a line. I ought to have about eight thousand dollars of prize-money,—four for the capture of New Orleans and four for the blockade runner, *Mary Sorley*.\*

“I think of you all so much at home, and I love you all so much, I wish I could receive a few lines from you just before the fight. I know I shall not disgrace

\*No prize-money was ever paid him for New Orleans, but he received some for the *Mary Sorley*.



myself, no matter how hot the fighting may be, for I shall be thinking of you all at the time. It seems such a long time since I heard from home ; but it is too late now.

“All your loved, familiar faces come before my eyes to-night as plainly as if I really saw them ; and, O mother ! mother ! I wish I could put my arms around your neck and receive your blessing and good-by once more.”

The battle of Mobile Bay began on the morning of August 5th, and the fleet and forts were fully engaged between seven and eight o'clock a. m. Some description of the battle is given in a letter which George wrote in answer to inquiries which were made of him about the engagement, and about the orders which the iron-clads received, the course which they pursued, etc.

These inquiries were in the first place about the course of the Union fleet, followed by minute questions about the orders received by the iron-clads, and then questions about the *Tennessee's* original position, subsequent movements during the fight, and finally about her surrender, and to whom. George said in answer :

“The iron-clads were ordered to follow according to rank, inside the fleet, between fleet and fort. The *Chickasaw* was placed last of the iron-clads, and had orders to be reserve force, and remain with the wooden vessels. Our course was between a certain buoy, marked on the chart, and the shore. This passage was known to be free from torpedoes, and was left for the blockade runners. It was a narrow passage, and was protected by the guns of the fort. *All* the vessels had orders to keep between that buoy and the shore ; but in other respects the iron-clads had separate orders from the wooden vessels. In the confusion resulting from

the destruction of the *Tecumseh* and the movements of the *Brooklyn*, the iron-clads received no orders, and followed in the line of the other vessels.

“I pushed the *Chickasaw* forward as rapidly as possible, and with the others fired at the fort to keep down its fire until the wooden vessels had passed.

“When the *Tennessee* passed my ship first, it was on my port side. After that she steered toward Fort Morgan. Some of our vessels anchored, others kept under way, and when the *Tennessee* approached the fleet again, she was at once attacked by the wooden vessels, but they made no impression upon her. An order was now brought from Admiral Farragut to the iron-clads, by Dr. Palmer, directing them to attack the *Tennessee*; but when they approached her, she moved off towards the fort again. I followed straight after her with the *Chickasaw*, and overtaking her, I poured solid shot into her as fast as I could, and after a short engagement forced her to surrender, having shot away her smoke-stack, destroyed her steering gear, and jammed her after-ports, rendering her guns useless, while one of my shots wounded Admiral Buchanan. I followed her close, my guns and turrets continuing in perfect order in spite of the strain upon them.

“When Johnston came on the roof of the *Tennessee*, and showed the white flag as signal of surrender, no vessel of our fleet—except the *Chickasaw*—was within a quarter of a mile. But the *Ossipee* was approaching, and her captain was much older than myself. I was wet with perspiration, begrimed with powder, and exhausted with constant and violent exertion; so I drew back and allowed Captain LeRoy to receive the surrender, though my first lieutenant, Mr. Hamilton, said at the time: ‘Captain Perkins, you are making a mistake.’”

At the time of this battle, through which George fought and manœuvred the *Chickasaw*, he was twenty-seven years and nine months old.

When the *Tecumseh* was blown up by a torpedo, it threw the fleet into the wildest excitement, and almost demoralized it. Captain Alden, of the *Brooklyn*, gave orders to back his ship, which further increased the confusion. It was a moment when the courage of the ships' commanders was thoroughly tested. George was in the forward turret of the *Chickasaw*, giving his personal attention to the sighting of the guns. His gunners turned pale when they saw the *Tecumseh* blown to pieces, and rushed from their guns, but George sprang before them, and drawing his pistol, declared he would shoot the first man who deserted his post; then giving an energetic kick to one who had flung himself at his feet, exclaiming, "Let me out, Captain, let me out!" he brought him to his senses and ordered him to his post.

I quote the following note from Commander Mahan's book :

"Lieutenant Commander Perkins and the executive officer of the *Chickasaw*, Mr. Hamilton, were going North from other ships, on leave of absence,—the latter on sick leave,—but had offered their services for the battle. The fire of the *Chickasaw* was the most damaging to the *Tennessee*. In her engagement with the ram, she fired fifty-two solid shot, almost all into the stern, where the greatest injury was done.

"The *Metacomet* went to Pensacola that night under a flag of truce, with the wounded from the fleet and the *Tennessee*, and was taken out by the pilot of the latter. He asked Captain Jewett, 'Who commanded the monitor that got under the ram's stern?' adding, 'Damn him! he stuck to us like a leech; we could not get

away from him ; it was he who cut away the steering gear, jammed the stern port shutters, and wounded Admiral Buchanan.' ”

Admiral Buchanan himself, in conversation with a New Hampshire man, who saw and talked with him not long after the battle, gave the whole credit of the capture of the *Tennessee* to the *Chickasaw*.

It was found upon examination that only *one* fifteen-inch shot from the Manhattan had penetrated the armor of the *Tennessee*, and this did not come through the woodwork, only breaking it and scattering splinters. All other damaging shots to the *Tennessee* were found by actual measurement to have been dealt by eleven-inch solid shot.

In the report on the survey of the *Tennessee* ordered by Farragut after the battle, the following statement is made :

“ There are unmistakable marks on the after part of the casement of not less than nine eleven-inch solid shot having struck within the space of a few square feet, in the immediate vicinity of that port.”

In his monograph on the battle of Mobile Bay, Captain Foxhall A. Parker says :

“ But the vessel that undoubtedly inflicted the most injury upon the ram was the monitor *Chickasaw*, commanded by Lieutenant Commander George H. Perkins, ‘ which hung,’ said the pilot of the *Tennessee*, ‘ close under our stern ; move where we would she was always there, firing the two eleven-inch guns in her forward turret like pocket pistols, so that she soon had the plates flying in the air.”

George’s own report is as follows :

“U. S. IRON-CLAD CHICKASAW,  
MOBILE BAY, August 7, 1864.

“SIR :

“I have the honor to submit the following report :  
At 5 : 30 a. m., on Friday, August 5th, in obedience to orders, I got under way, and took my position in rear of the *Winnabago* on the right of the line. I passed the forts with the rest of the fleet firing as rapidly as possible. Afterwards, in obedience to orders, I attacked the ram *Tennessee*, following her up closely, shooting away her smokestack and firing solid shot at her, until her flag was hauled down and a white flag raised. Her steering gear having been shot away I took her in tow, and brought her to anchor near the *Hartford*.

“In the afternoon of the same day, I again got under way, and brought a large barge—the *Ingomar*—out from under the guns of Fort Powell, exchanging several shots and being struck three times. On the morning of the 6th, I proceeded again to Fort Powell, which I found deserted and blown up. I towed out another barge. In the afternoon I advanced and shelled Fort Gaines.”

George then enumerates the officers and men who distinguished themselves on his ship, and closes with the report of the injuries received by the *Chickasaw*. There were no casualties among the men, but the vessel’s “smokestack was almost shot away, and one shot penetrated the deck on the starboard bow.”

Admiral Farragut says in his report to the department :

“I cannot give too much praise to Lieutenant Commander Perkins, who, though he had orders from the department to return North, volunteered to take command of the *Chickasaw*, and did his duty nobly.”

As George's management of the *Chickasaw* had proved Mr. Eads's position, with regard to his iron-clads, in the most triumphant manner, its success was a great gratification to this gentleman, and he told George's father that he would "gladly walk fifty miles to shake hands with the young man." He also requested him, as George was not easily accessible at the time, to have some description of the *Chickasaw's* part in the battle prepared for him to publish, for all testimony to the efficiency of his ships was valuable to him.

As it happened, Dr. E. R. Hutchins, who had been surgeon on the *Port Royal* during the fight, was visiting in Concord, and George's father requested the information from him as he was an eye-witness.

Dr. Hutchins most kindly wrote the following letter, giving an account of what he actually saw the *Chickasaw* perform, as well as what was the general sentiment of the fleet at the time of the battle, and my father forwarded it to Mr. Eads, who had it published in the *St. Louis Democrat*:

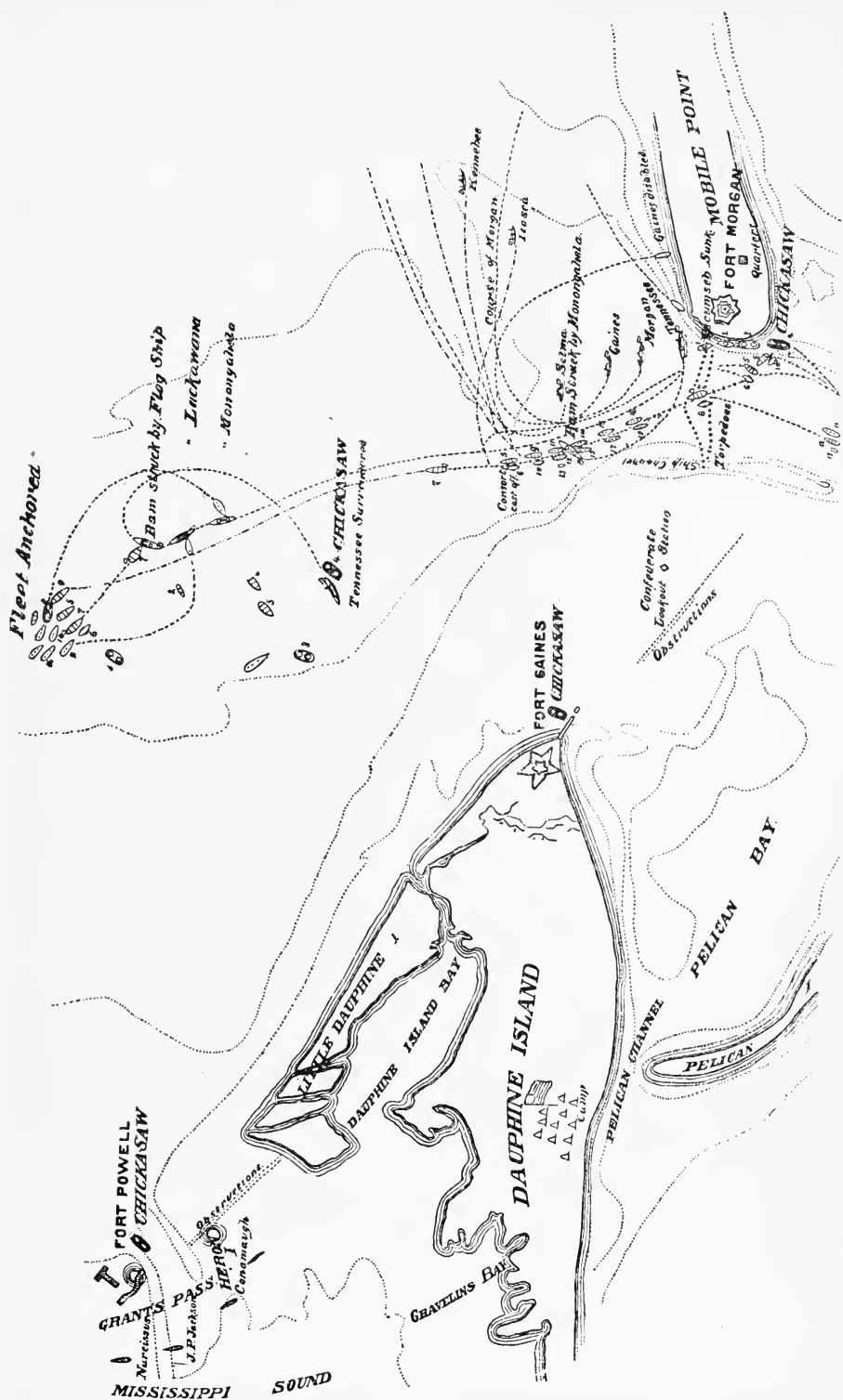
"THE NAVAL FIGHT IN MOBILE BAY.

"The following communication, lately received by James B. Eads, Esq., of St. Louis, and by him kindly furnished to us, presents probably the most veracious and accurate—certainly one of the most graphic—accounts yet given of the great naval engagement in Mobile Bay:

"PHILADELPHIA, PA., March 12, 1867.

"DEAR SIR: The reports of the Mobile fight, as published by the Hon. Secretary of the Navy, fail to do justice to two or three officers commanding their respective vessels during that justly celebrated naval engagement, and the greatest, and the most palpable and apparent, is that done the iron-clad *Chickasaw*, commanded by Lieutenant Commanding George H. Perkins.

"I speak without prejudice or bias, but simply for justice, being an



**Position of the “Chickasaw” during the Battle of Mobile Bay, and subsequent actions with Forts Caines and Powell.**





eye-witness to the whole engagement, and but reiterate what fell from the lips of almost all the officers and men after the fight ceased. I desire to give praise only where praise is due.

“I can now speak with freedom, my tongue no longer bridled by the forms of the army or navy. At the time of the fight I was the medical officer on board the United States ship *Port Royal*, commanded by as brave an officer as the navy produced, Lieutenant Commanding Gheradi.

“The morning of August 5, 1864, was sultry and dull, but found the fleet active and busy, and, as the ship’s bell rung out the hour of six, they were under way, the *Brooklyn* taking the lead, followed by the *Hartford*, on which was the intrepid chief, Farragut:

1st—*Brooklyn*, with *Octavia* on port side.

2d—*Hartford*, with *Metacomet*.

3d—*Richelieu*, with *Port Royal*.

4th—*Lackawanna*, with *Seminole*.

5th—*Monongahela*, with *Kennebeck*.

6th—*Ossipee*, with *Galena*.

“Inside and over the bar the iron-clads had taken their positions on the starboard side of the wooden ships, and were there exposed to the open fire of Fort Morgan and to the first attack of the ram *Tennessee*, the boast of the Confederate navy.

“About one quarter to seven o’clock, the *Tecumseh*, commanded by the gallant Craven, fired the first shot. No answer came from the fort, and still the fleet sailed proudly on, with every flag unfurled, and with as proud and brave men as ever a fleet possessed.

“A few moments past seven the forts gave us a salute from one of her guns, and this was immediately answered by the *Brooklyn*. This was the prelude to the grand action, which was at once commenced.

“All eyes were upon the *Brooklyn* and *Tecumseh*, which were still in the lead. Presently the *Brooklyn* stopped, then backed, and trouble was anticipated, and soon a gigantic uprising of water, and the *Tecumseh* was swallowed up with her gallant commander and nearly all her crew. Now, the Admiral, as if eager to avenge the loss of his gallant men, dashes by the *Brooklyn* and takes the lead himself.

“Every vessel, as soon as it could, brought its guns to bear on the fort. The fort also opened her guns, and it was one sheet of blaze, and one long, awful boom of cannon. Up to this time we had experienced no trouble from the rebel fleet; but now, with courage and boldness ‘worthy a better cause,’ the rebel commanders dashed out with their respective commands, and the *Morgan*, *Selma*, and

*Gaines* kept up an annoying fire, and the *Tennessee* dashed at the *Hartford*.

“Imagine those old sea dogs, Farragut and Buchanan, the best the navy had, who from early boyhood had been intimate friends, the one a loyal man fighting for and beneath the flag of his country, the other a traitor and rebel fighting against that flag.

“Every eye sought these commands, and when the ram failed to harm the *Hartford* with her prow, every heart thanked God. The *Tennessee* made an attempt in passing to ram every vessel in the line, and failed every time. The *Metacomet* and *Port Royal* pursued the *Selma*, which was steaming up the bay, and soon captured her. She surrendered to the *Metacomet*, which was much faster than the *Port Royal*.

“The ram *Tennessee* at this time went under the guns of the fort, like a great giant, resting for a moment but to renew the fight with still greater fury. The *Morgan* and *Gaines*, drawing but little water, retreated safely under the guns of the fort.

“The United States fleet steamed slowly westward, anxious and eagerly waiting for the *Tennessee* to attack it; and now it occurred. Slowly, steadily, and bravely she steamed towards us; and as my own vessel was lying still near by, my opportunity for observation was excellent.

“The *Monongahela*, Captain Strong, was the first to meet her, and it seemed to us who saw her, that she absolutely rode upon her as she struck her; and yet this blow was as harmless to the *Tennessee* as if it had been given by Bennett’s yacht *Henrietta*. The *Lackawanna* followed, as did also the *Hartford*, both striking her powerfully, and at the same time pouring their broadsides into her, and yet all this did her apparently no harm, but inflicted serious injury upon themselves. While the wooden ships were thus busy, the monitors took up the attack, the *Manhattan* now and then giving her the benefit of her fifteen-inch shot, while the *Chickasaw* was closely at her stern; as the *Tennessee* steered so steered the *Chickasaw*, keeping her guns constantly pounding the *Tennessee*’s stern, carrying away her smoke-stack, breaking in her port-shutters, shattering her steering gear—she was positively held in this position by the *Chickasaw*. No vessel under heaven could hold out under such punishment, and the *Tennessee* soon hoisted the white flag of surrender. There ended this terrible fight.

“The praise of Commander Perkins for the superb management of his command and the most admirable and efficient working of his ship

was upon the lips of all. I believe the *Chickasaw* did more to capture the *Tennessee* than all others combined; and I firmly believe, and I unhesitatingly affirm that belief, that without the iron-clads that day the laurels of victory would have fallen elsewhere. The iron-clads saved the day.

“The chief glory and honor of the victory of course belong to that brave old salamander, Farragut, and yet the pen of the knowing and unprejudiced historian *must* give laurels to others than those upon whom they chiefly fall in the official report of the fight.

“While Captain Jewett deserves praise and honor, he but did his *duty*; and just as well, just as bravely, and just as nobly did Gherardi and Brown and Donnelson theirs; and yet we are told, ‘if the other gunboats had done as much as the *Metacomet*, no rebel gunboat would have escaped!’

“*Where praise is due it should be given.* The service of the *Chickasaw*, so valuable and so indispensable, did not end here. That very afternoon, before the heat of battle had fairly subsided, she, under a heavy fire, and being struck three times, towed out a large barge from under the guns of Fort Powell. The following day she kept up a brisk fire upon Fort Gaines. Her light draft of water made her invaluable, while her invulnerable sides and her excellent steering, and her powerful armament seemed to me to render her decidedly the most effective vessel in that memorable fight.

“I have thus written a lengthy letter. I have really not given half the praise that is due the *Chickasaw*.

“A remark of Com. Johnston—a rebel on board the *Tennessee* at the time of her capture—occurs to me. In speaking of the *Chickasaw* in the fight he said: ‘If it had not been for that d—d black hulk hanging on our stern we would have got along well enough; she did us more damage than all the rest of the Federal fleet.’”

The following extract is from *Harper's Magazine*, which says, after describing the wooden ships ramming the *Tennessee*:

“By this time young Captain Perkins had worked his way close to the ram. He fought his vessel nobly, but the *Tennessee's* heavy plating made strong resistance against his eleven-inch shot. He disabled the rebel's steering apparatus, and by continuous pounding made the splinters fly among the rebels to their confu-

sion. One of the shots striking the after-port killed one man—utterly demolishing him—and wounding Buchanan.

“Within a square of ten feet he planted a dozen solid shot. The *Manhattan* fired six shots at the ram, one of which seems to have struck. The *Lackawanna* delivered the fairest ramming blow at the *Tennessee*. The affair was like a tournament, the fleet being spectators. The *Monongahela* rushed upon the *Tennessee* twice; after her, came the *Lackawanna*, *Hartford*, and *Ossipee*, and no doubt every vessel in the fleet would have punched her, had not the noble Perkins made her cry enough.”

The next extract is from a review written for the *Nation*, by General J. C. Palfrey, on Captain Parker's

“BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY.

“Lieutenant Commander Perkins, of the *Chickasaw*, had been ordered North, but asked for and obtained permission to wait, till he had carried his monitor through the expected fight. Though one of the youngest officers in command of a ship, he had the sagacity to reflect that in a strange harbor, full of torpedoes, he should be safest alongside of an enemy's vessel, which for its own safety might be expected to keep clear of obstructions.

“Accordingly he kept close under the stern of the *Tennessee* and would not be thrown off, and pounded away at close quarters with his eleven-inch guns.

“He succeeded in jamming one of her ports and opening a breach for his shells to her interior, and to him Commodore Parker awards the praise of giving the vital wound which caused her surrender.”

The New York *Herald* of August 20th, 1864, contains the following article :

## “WHAT THE MONITORS DID AT MOBILE.

“At eight o'clock our fleet had all passed, and were beyond range of Fort Morgan. At that hour the fight began earnestly and defiantly with the rebel ram. For two hours this unequal contest lasted; that single iron gunboat skilfully defying the efforts of our largest and fleetest vessels to run her down, and her thick iron mail resisting our heaviest metal. It was a most desperate struggle. Our great sloops of war, with the little monitor, sailed about her in a regular circle, pouring into her a constant fire of all calibres, including the heaviest known in modern naval warfare, and yet she withstood it all and answered gun for gun. Her endurance was certainly unparalleled. Even without any other effect upon her, it would seem that her men would be exhausted, and compelled for very weariness to give in; but they fought on, showing no signs of fatigue. At last the double-turreted monitor, *Chickasaw*, steamed close under her stern, and at close range discharged her two forward guns. When the smoke of these tremendous discharges cleared away, the smokestack of the *Tennessee* was found to be gone, and the smoke of her engines was suffocating her men beneath the casemates. Game to the last, she finally surrendered when she could no longer resist.”

The *Herald* correspondent, in a more detailed account of the fight, written two or three days later, again alludes to the surrender of the *Tennessee*, and writes as follows :

“The final shots that terminated the career of the rebel vessel were fired by the monitor *Chickasaw*, which passed close under her stern, giving her the full weight of two eleven-inch solid shot from her bow turret, which damaged the cover of the ram's stern-ports.

“ Buchanan went aft with his engineer to readjust the port-cover; while engaged in this operation the *Chickasaw* brought her after-turret to bear, one shot from which carried away the tiller chains of the *Tennessee*, rendering her unmanagable, while the other shot entered the damaged port, killing one man and fracturing Buchanan’s leg. Having already lost her smokestack, the rebel ship was now utterly helpless. She was therefore surrendered at once, hauling down her colors to the *Chickasaw*, Lieutenant Commander Perkins, commanding.”

On the afternoon of August 5th, after the action with the *Tennessee* in the morning, Captain Perkins took the *Chickasaw* close under the guns of Fort Powell, exchanging shots with the fort and bringing away a large barge, the *Ingomar*. Of this occurrence, a New Orleans paper speaks as follows :

“ Lieutenant Commander Perkins, of the monitor *Chickasaw*, steamed off in the direction of Fort Powell, and then discovered, a short distance from the fort, and within easy range, a barge at anchor filled with stones. It was the intention to sink it in the channel of Grant’s Pass for the purpose of obstructing it. The *Chickasaw* passed between the fort and the barge, secured the latter with cables, and towed the barge off, the fort firing in the meantime.”

Col. J. M. Williams, the rebel commander of Fort Powell, reports as follows :

“ About 2 : 30 p. m., one of the enemy’s monitors came up within seven hundred yards of the fort, firing rapidly with shell and grape. . . . The iron-clad’s fire made it impossible to man the two guns in the rear, and I made no attempt to do so.

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“The shells exploding in the face of the work displaced the sand so rapidly that I was convinced, that unless the iron-clad was driven off, it would explode my magazine, and make the bomb-proof chambers untenable, in two days at the furthest. To drive it from its position I believed to be impossible with my imperfect works, and so telegraphed to Colonel Anderson, commanding Fort Gaines, that unless I could evacuate I would be compelled to surrender within forty-eight hours.”

The result of the *Chickasaw's* bombardment was that Fort Powell was evacuated after dark, and that a rebel lieutenant was “left in the fort with orders to prepare a train and match to explode the magazine as soon as the garrison had reached the mainland. . . . The fort was blown up at 10:30 p. m.”

On going down with the *Chickasaw* on the morning of August 6, Captain Perkins, as stated in his report, found Fort Powell blown up, and towed out another barge. Of these Admiral Farragut speaks in his report of August 8, where he says :

“We took some covered barges also from Fort Powell and Cedar Point which do us as good service as a workshop.”

In hastening the surrender of Fort Gaines, the *Herald* correspondent thus speaks of the part taken by the *Chickasaw* :

“Yesterday morning on discovering the full extent of Granger's operations, and being warned by a few eleven-inch shell from the monitor *Chickasaw*, which created some destruction within the works, the commandant, Colonel Anderson, sent out a flag of truce proposing a surrender.”

Admiral Farragut thus reports it :

“On the afternoon of the 6th the *Chickasaw* went down

and shelled Fort Gaines, and on the morning of the 7th, I received a communication from Colonel Anderson, commanding the fort, offering to surrender."

The *Herald* correspondence was copied into a Concord paper, and the editor comments as follows :

"Lieutenant George H. Perkins, above mentioned, is a son of Hon. Hamilton E. Perkins of this city. He has been for more than two years on the West Gulf Squadron, and at the capture of New Orleans, the *Cayuga*, of which he was executive officer, led the squadron up the Mississippi. On arriving at the city, Mr. Perkins accompanied Admiral Bailey to the city hall to demand the surrender of the place. Just before the attack on Mobile he obtained leave of absence, but learning of the preparations for the attack, he volunteered to remain, and was assigned by Admiral Farragut to the command of the *Chickasaw*. He is one of the youngest officers of his rank in the navy."

The fleet engineer, W. H. Shock, being impressed with the merits of the iron-clads furnished the government by Mr. Eads, wrote to the Hon. Henry T. Blow, of St. Louis, the following letter, which Mr. Blow published in the *Missouri Democrat*, with a preface, from which I take the following extract :

"It has been the good fortune of our city to have furnished to the government an iron-clad navy, whose history, marked throughout by the most brilliant exploits, has no parallel in this age of invention and progress."

"FLAGSHIP HARTFORD,

"WESTERN GULF BLOCKADING SQUADRON,

"ENGINEER'S DEP'T, OFF MOBILE BAY,

"August 11, 1864.

"HON. HENRY T. BLOW, ST. LOUIS, MO. :

"*My Dear Sir*: Last Friday, the 5th, we met the



enemy in Mobile Bay, and it was comparatively short work—say one and a half hours—before he was ours, with the monster ram *Tennessee* lying quietly under the protection of the Admiral's flagship, the *Hartford*, a mass of invulnerability, with the old flag waving over her.

\* \* \* \* \*

“You are doubtless aware that it was confidently predicted by some, that the *Chickasaw* and *Winnebago* could not go to sea; and further that their armor was not sufficiently heavy to contend against heavy guns; that they were calculated only for river service, etc. Against each and all of these propositions I stoutly contended, and expressed my views to Assistant Secretary Fox, while in Washington, giving it as my opinion that they could not only go to sea, but render efficient service at the attack on Mobile. Shortly after my return to New Orleans, I was agreeably astonished to see them coming to anchor off the city. They were soon prepared for sea and sent over to the Admiral.

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“The *Chickasaw* in the meanwhile was quietly watching the movements about Fort Morgan and the rebel gunboats close by, and thus the time was disposed of until Friday, the 5th, when the squadron was arranged in line of battle for final attack.

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“Soon the *Tecumseh* went down from a torpedo, she having fired but twice. The *Manhattan*, for some reason, seemed to work rather sluggishly. She succeeded, however, in getting a fifteen-inch shot well directed on the side of the casemate of the ram *Tennessee* which crushed in the iron plating, broke through the wooden backing, and was turned off. This shot showed the great power of resistance which this monitor possessed.

“It was soon evident that whatever else had to be done, the ram *Tennessee* was either to be destroyed or captured. That was a fixed fact, and a portion of the squadron went at her with a will. She was rammed, she was jammed, and broadside after broadside was hurled at her, which rebounded from her side and fell harmless in the water.

“In the meantime the *Chickasaw* was playing around her, endeavoring to find a weak spot if one existed. It was soon discovered that she had one, and that was the after-gun port. Into this the *Chickasaw* sent a shell, which killed part of the gun crew, and wounded Admiral Buchanan. Another disabled the steering apparatus, and up went the white flag. The rebels did everything to shake the little *Chickasaw* off, but it was impossible; she held on with a tenacity that secured success.

“In the fight the *Tennessee* lost her smoke-pipe. I have had a new one made, and by this time the ‘boast of the Confederate navy’ is battering the walls of Fort Morgan, with the stars and stripes waving over her, having in the last few days changed her base of operations. The *Chickasaw* and *Winnebago* are both engaged in the same good work.

“I beg you will remember me most kindly to your family, and to my St. Louis friends generally, and

“Believe me as ever,

“Yours most truly,

“W. H. SHOCK,

“*Fleet Engineer.*”

From the “Chapter in History” before alluded to, as published by Mr. Eads in defence of his monitors, I copy these closing sentences:

“The *Chickasaw* obtained a position under the stern of the rebel ram, and poured in such a storm of eleven-

inch solid steel and cast-iron shot that the flag of the ram was finally hauled down to her.

“Throughout the fight the *Tennessee* found it impossible to get out of the raking fire in which she was held by this iron-clad, in which position the latter delivered fifty-two eleven-inch shot at her. Her commander, George H. Perkins, was handsomely complimented by Farragut.”

This “Chapter in History” was copied into the Concord *Statesman*, with the following editorial comment :

“TOO MODEST.

“There is an article in this paper entitled ‘A Chapter in History,’ which we have printed because of its general interest, and especially because of its few words of just mention for our townsman, Commander George H. Perkins of the navy.

“The battle of Mobile Bay was one of the great battles of the war, and no ship’s commander engaged in it was entitled to half as much credit for gallantry, good judgment, and persistency as Perkins. He captured the *Tennessee*, and lay beside her modestly waiting for an officer of higher rank to come up in his ship and receive the surrender. By this the reader will infer, what is the fact, that Commander Perkins is as modest as he is brave. His record all through the war is of the very highest character.”

Accompanying this is a diagram of the vessels as they advanced to the attack in Mobile Bay, and the spot where the *Tennessee* surrendered ; also Forts Powell and Gaines.

As soon as George has a moment’s rest from the toil and turmoil of the fight, he writes his mother the following line :

“ U. S. IRON-CLAD CHICKASAW,

“ MOBILE BAY, August 6, 1864.

“ DEAR MOTHER :

“ *All right.*

“ Your affectionate son,

“ GEORGE.”

August 8th he writes :

“ MY DEAR MOTHER :

“ I have but a moment to write. I only want to tell you I am well. We had a desperate fight on the morning of the 5th. No one was hurt on board my vessel, but the squadron lost a good many. Captain Craven of the *Tecumseh* was blown up by a torpedo just ahead of me. I will write you more about it when I have time. I had a hard fight with the rebel ram *Tennessee*, and have been highly complimented by the Admiral and other old officers for the part I took in the engagement. I have been fighting forts every day since, and Fort Gaines surrendered this morning. I shelled Fort Powell the afternoon of the 5th, and during the night the rebels blew it up. I think Fort Morgan will surrender soon. The other iron-clads are more or less disabled. I told you I would come out all right !

“ As you like to hear all the complimentary things about me, I must tell you that I have the credit of taking the rebel ram *Tennessee* and of wounding Admiral Buchanan, and doing all the damage that caused her surrender.

“ Captain Jenkins of the *Richmond* told Admiral Farragut that I ought to be promoted at once for my gallantry in this fight. I only tell you this because I thought you would like to hear it. It is nothing now but fight, fight, fight, all the time, so excuse haste. Will write you again soon. Love to all.

“ Your affectionate son,

“ GEORGE.

“P. S.—As soon as Fort Morgan surrenders, I go to Dog River Bar, and attack the batteries there.”

“U. S. IRON-CLAD CHICKASAW,

“MOBILE BAY, August 11, 1864.

“It is a rainy, stormy day, and we are lying quiet about fifteen hundred yards from Fort Morgan. The fort has not surrendered yet, but must in a short time. The army has landed in the rear, and is putting up batteries about five hundred yards distant from it. We have not opened on the fort to-day, and so far not a single gun has been fired. The rebels are all inside, and we can see each other very plainly. I do not think they like the looks of the iron-clads. I have no idea whether the Admiral intends attacking Mobile, or not. This was a brilliant victory, and should be followed up.

“I suppose you have all felt anxious about me lately, but I feel much better now than if I had come home. The Admiral and all give me credit for the manner in which I fought my ship, and Admiral Buchanan said himself that if it had not been for me, he should have escaped. I have been hard at work since I have been in here. I expect to go to Dog River Bar to attack the batteries there to-morrow.

“The reason my ship is of so much importance is because the other monitors cannot work their turrets. I cannot help feeling very much flattered at the confidence that is placed in me and at the things that are said about me. I suspect you would think I was flattered too much! I do not know when I shall come home, but not, I suppose, till the fighting is over here.”

“U. S. IRON-CLAD CHICKASAW,

“FOUR MILES BELOW MOBILE CITY,

“August 16, 1864.

“I have been hard at work since I have been in this

bay, fighting almost continually. We are all nearly used up on board this vessel. As mine is the only effective iron-clad, I am obliged to be constantly in motion.

“The city and its defences are now in plain sight of me—its iron-clads, batteries, rams, and all. Yesterday I had a little fight with the rams across the obstructions. The channel to Mobile is filled up with spiles, sunken vessels, and torpedoes. The rebs have two very good-looking rams, and the obstructions are formidable obstacles which it may be a good deal of trouble for me to clear, as I am now on the advance.

“For your sakes I am happy to say the *Chickasaw* has won for herself quite a name. I was mighty glad to get letters from home to-day, for it had been such a long while since I had heard. *Do write*, for now the mails will probably come with some regularity, and I am always thinking of you all and longing to hear from you. I am pretty well, but a little New Hampshire air would improve me.”

“CHICKASAW, August 17, 1864.

“I am now almost near enough to shell Mobile, and I have plenty of excitement. Yesterday two of my boats had quite a little fight with some guerillas on shore. The Admiral says that he shall take Mobile soon and that I shall ‘come, too.’ Fort Morgan has not surrendered yet, but this does not affect us much, as we can get all our supplies through Grant’s Pass.”

“AUGUST 18, 1864.

“We are still having lively times around Fort Morgan. Last night a couple of rebel rams came out, and we lay looking at each other all night. This morning I expected a fight, but they went back to the city.

“I have not been very well for a day or so. I have

to be around all the time, day and night, and these hot iron-clads use me up. I am writing now on board Captain Jewett's ship, the *Metacomct*. He is a great friend of mine, and a mighty fascinating fellow."

"AUGUST 20, 1864.

"Have just received your letters. I was so glad to get a letter from Aunt Harriet, and to know that she is with you. I am so sorry that I cannot be at home while she is there, for it is such a long time since I have seen her. I shall write her a long letter as soon as I can.

"I am ordered to shell Fort Morgan, and I shall probably be under the fort two or three days. I cannot write more now; but you will hear as soon as possible if I am not all right. Give Aunt Harriet a good kiss for me. I shall go and see her if ever I get home again. Shelling Fort Morgan will be such hot work that I hope it will surrender soon."

"CHICKASAW, August 24, 1864.

"Fort Morgan surrendered yesterday, and I have been having a rest to-day. We were very glad of the surrender on board this ship, for all my officers and men were getting perfectly worn out from having been so constantly under fire. And now for Mobile! The Admiral is in a hurry for me to get up the bay, for, as I have said before, I am the only effective iron-clad he has.

"You know, dear mother, I have to tell you all my compliments, so I must write what Captain Strong of the *Monongahela* has just said to me. He is going to Washington on official business, and as he bade me good-by, he said, 'When I come back, Perkins, I shall bring your promotion with me!' Yes, it is true that I

get much praise and flattery for my success, and I am glad for your sake. The Admiral speaks of me in the highest terms to every one.

“Captain Jenkins, of the *Richmond*, who is one of the kindest and best of men, talks about me as enthusiastically as if he was my father, and always calls me ‘his pet.’ After the battle of Mobile Bay, he told Admiral Farragut on no account to let me go home till all the fighting here was over, for they could not get along without me.

“The other day when I was sick he sent his surgeon up, on a steamer from the lower bay, to take care of me, and to bring me a lot of good things to eat. I called on him to-day, and he asked if my sisters would not thank him for making a ‘hero’ of me. Perhaps I ought not to tell you all these things; but I do like to have you know of any pleasant or successful thing that happens to me.

“I am getting very anxious to hear from home. I have heard something good about Hamilton. Captain Johnson, who is stationed at the naval school, wrote a friend, who told me, that Hamilton was a very smart boy, and would make a brilliant officer. Well, I wish I could see him and all of you to-night.

“I was talking to the Admiral to-day—he talks a great deal to me when I go to see him—when, all at once, he fainted away. He is not very well, and is all tired out. It gave me quite a shock, and shows how exhausted he is, and his health is not very good anyway. He is a mighty fine old fellow. I want to come home just to tell you about all I have been doing. It has been so exciting that it seems as if I had a great deal to say. If I could only talk instead of writing, I could tell you all so much better.”



“CHICKASAW, August 31, 1864.

“I have not been very well. These iron-clads are pretty rough on a fellow; they are hot, and have no comforts. I often think of my nice little cabin on the *Sciota*, and of her officers and crew who seemed so fond of me. But this is a fine command, and much as I want to come home, I shall keep it till the fighting is over. I am only waiting till the repairs on the machinery are completed to go up to Mobile. The army is landing and marching up. I do not know what the Admiral will do, but he says he is waiting for this ship to be ready.

“When I have been up the bay I have been near enough to have a good view of Mobile, and the rebels may give us some trouble yet, for they are strengthening their defences. But now, though, there is only one way for it all to end,—they are as completely shut off from the bay as an inland town, and the army is closing in the rest.

“We received the papers to-day describing our fight in the bay, and I see the *Chickasaw* is spoken well of by every one. I am glad of it, for I know it will please you. I am getting anxious for more letters and more news from home. How does Frank like the gun that I sent him from New Orleans?”

“CHICKASAW, September 9, 1864.

“I enclose you a list of such mementoes of the fights which I have been in, as I have sent home, and wish to have kept. In the first place, one of the pistols, which I sent home after the fight at New Orleans, came from the forts, and the other came from the rebel gunboat *Governor Moore*, which surrendered to the *Cayuga*; the double-barrelled shotgun, which I sent to Hamilton, came from the Chalmette regiment; the

rebel flag came from New Orleans before the surrender of the city; the sword came from a New Hampshire captain in the rebel service; the last double-barrelled gun was taken near Donaldsonville, on the Mississippi, where I was fired into and nearly destroyed on the *New London*.

“The Whitworth shells are curiosities, owing to their construction, and the long range of the gun, which throws them easily five miles. These guns are of English make, and the one that was at Fort Morgan annoyed the blockading fleet more than anything else. There is also a pistol that was on the rebel ram *Tennessee*, and a pistol from Fort Gaines, and a shot from Fort Powell. I will send you soon a sword taken from a field-officer in Fort Morgan, and with it the rebel flag that floated over the fort during the entire bombardment. This latter I obtained in a rather remarkable manner.

“The sailors from this ship drew down the flag, and one of them seized it and hid it in his bosom. There was not much left of it—it was so riddled and torn. The sailor brought it to me, saying that no one had a right to it but the captain of the *Chickasaw*. I hardly knew what to do about it, but he seemed so earnest I could not refuse to take it from him. It is a mere fragment anyway, so I send it home. I wish you would have all these things kept together, for perhaps some day, somebody would like to see them, and while I live I shall like to have a look at them once in a while.”

The New Orleans *Era*, of Tuesday morning, August 30, 1864, says of the capture of Fort Morgan :

“It was a glorious sight to see the gallant Captain Perkins, in the *Chickasaw*, nearly all the morning almost touching the wharf, and pouring in his terrible

missiles, two at a time, and making bricks and mortar fly in all directions, then moving a little ahead or astern to get a fresh place.

“He stayed there till nearly noon, when he hauled off to cool his guns and give his men some refreshment. In the afternoon he took his ship in again and turret after turret was emptied at the fort.”

George remained in command of the *Chickasaw* until after the fall of Mobile in the spring of 1865. He wrote home frequently, and his letters show the pride which he took in his ship, which was called the “crack” iron-clad, and was an object of interest and curiosity. Among them on board they invented a protection against torpedoes, and a picture of the *Chickasaw* with this attachment appeared in *Harper's Weekly*.

While Admiral Farragut remained in command at Mobile he made several visits to the *Chickasaw* and praised the order in which it was kept, and spoke of the dependence he placed upon it, and of his confidence in its commander. He was most kindly and flattering in his intercourse with George, and praised him warmly to others.

Years after, in the organization of the “Society of the Army and Navy of the Gulf,” Admiral Farragut's secretary writes :

“It will be most agreeable to Admiral Farragut to have Commander Perkins associated with him on the Committee of the Society. He is one of his favorite officers, having served most gallantly with him in Mobile Bay, and at all times proving himself a most accomplished gentleman and officer.”

George's old commander on the coast of Africa, Captain Armstrong, writes to him from New Orleans :

“Mrs. Armstrong and Admiral Farragut had a long talk about you ; both belong to your admiration society, and your ears must have tingled.”

I have once before in these pages recorded what was Admiral Farragut's latest expression with regard to my brother, but as the letter lies before me now, I cannot help copying the whole sentence :

“Mr. McRitchie tells me that Farragut said to him less than a month before the Admiral's death, when talking about the Gulf squadron, that Captain Perkins was young and handsome, and that no braver man ever trod a ship's deck ; that his work in the *Chickasaw* did more to capture the *Tennessee* than all the guns of the fleet put together.”

The commander of the *Chickasaw* earned a reputation for her management, in other respects than that of her handling in warlike manœuvres. I have letters and reports of official inspection, and comparisons of estimates, which prove that she was always kept in order and ready for duty at much less expense than any of the other monitors. The letters express surprise, and contain compliments on its commander's ability, and manner of doing this. Indeed, all the ships, with which he has been connected, have had a superlative reputation for neatness and order.

George remained in command of the *Chickasaw* for more than a year. It was not a very comfortable home. The heat of the furnaces made it impossible to stay in the cabin for any length of time. He finally arranged a tent to live in on deck, where, at least, he could have fresh air ; but this did not prove a very secure protection when the autumn and winter gales began to blow. They would frequently take off the whole affair, and he and his belongings would be

deluged with rain and nearly blown overboard. When nothing else was doing, he would resort to his old amusement of hunting, and for much the same reason, namely, to supply his table. Having a good steward he achieved fame in a new direction, that of an Amphitryon; and officers, both of the navy and army, found at his table a grateful variety from their usual scanty fare.

July 10, 1865, the commander of the *Chickasaw* was detached, and returned home to enjoy his well-earned leave of absence. He was received with enthusiasm by all who knew him, and complimentary letters poured in on him and on his family. He was at that time the embodiment of an attractive naval officer, and might have figured in the pages of romance. He was possessed of the high spirits, the daring, the confidence in others, and, as was said of him, the "frank, sailor-like way and *bouhomic*, which excites the admiration of all." It is not my prejudice which says this; it is but an epitome of the remarks made about him at that time, and which still confront me from letters, now fast growing yellow with age.

A brother officer from New Hampshire writes me at this time, and is most anxious that "The state of New Hampshire should do itself the honor of having a painting hung up in its capitol, representing Perkins, standing at the bow of the little *Cayuga*, literally piloting the fleet through the hurricane of shot and shell in that battle of New Orleans, which was, in some respects, the grandest naval achievement of the war. Certainly our state house, where naval subjects are entirely unrepresented, has no worthier or more heroic subject on its walls."

Again, later, the same officer writes: "No state in the Union was better represented in the naval field

during the war than was New Hampshire, in the person and deeds of Captain Perkins. Had he been an army man, especially a volunteer, his portrait would long since have been hung, and his praises continually sounded from one end of the state to another." This officer returns frequently, in his letters, to the subject of the portrait for the state house, and seems to desire earnestly that his own state should do George this honor.

Another friend writes of him: "He is a rare character. Every one will rejoice when he receives the reward which is his due, for every one loves him. He is fitted always to take the lead, and makes no enemies."

When my brother returned North in the summer of sixty-five, his friends urged that the members of congress from New Hampshire should be applied to, and asked to demand from the government a recognition of his services. But this was repugnant to his feelings; for it seemed to him that such acknowledgment would and should come spontaneously. In answer to the remonstrances of his friends, he would say, "Well, I shall get my thirty numbers anyway," an advance in rank to that degree being one of the rewards prescribed by naval ruling for gallantry in action.

That winter he was ordered as superintendent of iron-clads in the harbor of New Orleans, and the next year, in May, 1867, he was sent on a three years' cruise in the Pacific, as first lieutenant of the *Lackawanna*.

As Farragut's conduct began to attract attention in not securing for the officers who served under him any acknowledgment from the government, or any special promotion, this neglect on his part was greatly commented on. All turned to my brother, and his war

record, as an instance of such shining merit, that it must be plain to all, *he* could not be overlooked, that reward in his case would be but the simplest act of justice. The advancement of thirty numbers in his rank was looked upon as a certainty, and as he was about to leave the country in the *Lackawanna*, Admiral Jenkins writes to wish him "A pleasant and profitable cruise, and the thirty numbers to which you are entitled for your services."

I will quote here a letter from the same admiral, written more than two years previously, which will prove how confidently the officers of the fleet in Mobile Bay, ever after the action, expected that by every government mail, or by every officer who came out on detail, would be sent promotion and thanks from the government to the commander of the *Chickasaw*:

"U. S. S. RICHMOND,

"MOBILE LOWER BAY, October 5, 1864.

"MY DEAR BOY:

"I was very glad to hear of your approach in your iron cage. I send over papers, although they may not be as late as you have. I hope with all my heart that before many weeks you will receive from the President a substantial testimonial of your gallantry, coolness, and good judgment in our action on the 5th, and yours especially with Gaines, Powell, and Morgan.

"I am, sincerely your friend,

"THORNTON A. JENKINS,

"*Commander, U. S. N.*"

A story is told of my brother, at the time of his joining the *Lackawanna*, which gives perhaps as good an idea of the quickness of his wit as any one which I know of him, or have been told. It is a favorite

anecdote among his naval comrades, and I have been assured that it should not be omitted from any sketch which pretends to preserve his characteristics.

While the *Lackawanna* was fitting out in New York harbor, her captain thought fit to absent himself at his own pleasure, though doubtless it was with the knowledge and consent of the commandant of the yard, Admiral Godon. This left all the task of preparing the ship for sea on my brother's shoulders, and as he had been anticipating a week's leave of absence before starting on the long voyage, he found his chance fast slipping away. He therefore resolved to take it, whether or no. Naval discipline, just after the war, was not what it is nowadays.

Admiral Stringham was, at that time, port admiral, and Admiral Godon, commandant. The latter had rather a grudge against George ever since the old coast of Africa days, because my brother had determined not to be delayed about getting the *Sumter* ready for her return voyage, and had played the part of "the early bird who caught the worm;" or, in other words, had gone to the coal station so quickly upon the squadron getting orders for home, that he had coaled ship and started before Godon, then flag-officer of that station, had arrived, and the flagship, therefore, had to wait for the next supplies.

The absence of the captain and the executive officer of the *Lackawanna* left the navigator in command, and when, one morning, Admiral Godon sent for the commanding officer of the *Lackawanna*, the navigator presented himself, and, in answer to Godon's remark, "I wish to see the commanding officer of the *Lackawanna*," answered, "I am the commanding officer of the *Lackawanna*." "Where is Lieutenant Perkins?" said the admiral. "On shore, sir," said the navigator.



“Very well. Tell him, when he comes aboard, that I wish to see him.”

The next day the admiral sent again for the “commanding officer of the *Lackawanna*.” Again the navigator appeared. “I don’t want you,” said the admiral. “I want the commanding officer of the *Lackawanna*.” “I am the commanding officer of the *Lackawanna*,” again answered the navigator. “Where is Lieutenant Perkins?” screamed Godon, in the high voice always peculiar to him, but now raised to a much higher pitch by wrath. “On shore, sir.” “How long has he been ashore?” shouted the admiral. “About four days, sir,” answered the navigator. “That’ll do, sir,” said the angry admiral. “When he comes back tell him to report to me.”

As soon as possible the navigator communicated the state of things to George, and warned him of “shoals ahead.” But George finished his week’s leave tranquilly, and, having returned to the ship, proceeded to report to the commandant. He was coldly received by that officer, who reproved him with great severity, and wound up his remarks by saying, in a fiercely ironical tone, “Now, Lieutenant Perkins, one of three people is responsible for this irregular proceeding,—this gross neglect of the duties of an officer while his ship is in this yard,—and it is either you, Admiral Stringham, or myself. *One* of us must be subjected to trial by court-martial, and be prepared to stand its sentence. Now, sir, which shall it be, sir? *Which* shall it be?”

George approached the angry official in a most affectionate manner, and, with a bland smile, remarked, confidentially, “Between you and me, Admiral, let’s put it all on old Stringham!”

This was more than Godon’s sense of fun could resist. His anger vanished in an uncontrollable burst

of laughter, and the executive officer of the *Lackawanna* pursued his further course unmolested. In due time the ship was ready for sea, and George received high praise for her thorough preparation, despite his week's leave of absence.

Acting Lieutenant Hamilton, who served with my brother on the *Chickasaw*, was a very fine man, of an excellent family, and greatly respected. He entered the war from conscientious motives, and meeting my brother and liking him, gladly volunteered for the battle of Mobile as first lieutenant of the *Chickasaw*. He deplored, with all his heart, the youthful modesty which influenced its commander to defer to Captain LeRoy of the *Ossipee*, in the matter of the *Tennessee's* surrender. Among the letters, both of praise and remonstrance, which were showered upon him during these years, I quote from two of Mr. Hamilton's, written at different dates :

“MY DEAR CAPTAIN :

“The last *Army and Navy Journal* has my name among the list of promotions, and I am glad that it is dated soon enough to report it as ‘of the *Chickasaw*.’ For me, the Mobile cruise, with its hardships and pleasures, rams and obstructions, has been one of great interest. By the excitement I gained my health, and, by your kind interest in my behalf, my promotion.

“Even in her retirement, the old *Chickasaw* maintains her prestige, for she is clean, and in better order than any of the other monitors. History must record the fact that the cruise of the *Chickasaw* was the most interesting and successful of the war. I hope you will soon receive the promotion you deserve.

“Yours sincerely,

“WILLIAM HAMILTON.”

A year later he writes :

“Perkins, I am proud of my connection with the *Chickasaw*. Truth is mighty and will prevail! The old *Chickasaw* is being immortalized in prose and verse as the vessel that did the solid work in Mobile. The fabulous—to say the least—statements of Nicholson have done their end, and many have been gulled thereby. Had these deceived persons been in a single vessel in Mobile Bay, with none but the *Manhattan* to protect them, they would have made another tale not quite so flattering to the ‘war-horse.’”

On account of his habit of bragging, this commander received the nickname of “War-horse Nicholson.”

But, as I have said, my brother was ordered in May, 1867, as first lieutenant of the *Lackawanna*, for three years’ cruise in the Pacific, and he sailed away from his country, and boards and committees on naval matters met and dissolved. Changes were made in the service, from which some officers reaped advantage, chiefly through political influence. Nothing was done for him, and his career furnishes but another illustration of the proverb that “Republics are always ungrateful.”

He was stationed about three years in the Pacific. During this time he lost his brothers Roger and Frank, of whom he was very fond, and by whose loss his life was much saddened. The headquarters of the *Lackawanna* were at Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, and he spent much of his spare time traveling over these, even to their remotest corners. He enjoyed visiting the ranches, and joining in the exciting though perilous occupation of driving the wild cattle down from the mountains, where one’s safety depended almost wholly on skilful horsemanship. He ascended the

great volcano of Kiliau; went to every interesting locality; studied the natives; attended their feasts and learned their customs; and the delicious climate rendered it possible for him to enjoy, all the year round, the open air life, of which he is so fond. As usual, he wrote frequently, and occasionally newspaper bits, like the following, informed us that he was attending to his country's reputation :

“The commander of the British war vessel *Chanticleer*, at Honolulu, set his band playing ‘Dixie,’ alongside the United States steamer *Lackawanna*. The latter retorted with ‘Wearing of the Green.’

“The whaling bark, *Daniel Wood*, of New Bedford, was wrecked on the French Frigate Shoals, April 14th. Captain Richard, and a portion of the crew, arrived at Honolulu after a passage of 450 miles in an open boat. The U. S. S. *Lackawanna* immediately sailed for the scene of the wreck to rescue the remainder of the crew.”

While the *Lackawanna* was at Honolulu, an event occurred which was referred to in the discussions of congress with regard to Hawaiian matters in the session of 1892-'93, as illustrating the policy of our government. The official records of the government afford a very complete and entertaining history of how the United States became the possessor of an important island in the Pacific Ocean, far beyond the present confines of the United States. That island is called “Midway Island,” so named by our navy department, principally on the unofficial suggestion of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, in recognition of the geographical position of these islands on the route from the Sandwich Islands to Japan. Midway Island is not far from the much talked of Hawaiian Islands, being one of a chain of small islands in the North Pacific Ocean, stretching

from the Hawaiian group in a general northwesterly direction.

The attention of Secretary Welles was called to this island as possibly destined to prove of early importance as a coaling station for United States vessels cruising in these waters. Secretary Welles issued an order to Rear Admiral Thatcher, commanding the North Pacific squadron, to detail the *Lackawanna*, or some other suitable vessel, to search for the island, and having found it, to take possession in the name of the United States.

How completely and formally that order was carried into execution, is shown in the very interesting report made by Captain William Reynolds, the officer in command of the *Lackawanna*. The gallant captain was very proud of having been concerned in taking possession of the first island ever added to the dominion of the United States beyond our own shores, and in his report he well describes the somewhat dramatic and spectacular performance of taking possession of Midway Island in the name of the United States. Captain Reynolds says:

“I have the honor to report that on Wednesday, the 28th of August, 1867, in compliance with the orders of the Hon. Secretary of the Navy of May 28, I took formal possession of Brook’s Island and reefs for the United States. Having previously erected a suitable flagstaff, I landed on that day, accompanied by all the officers who could be spared from the ship, with six boats armed and equipped, and under a salute of twenty-one guns, and with three cheers, hoisted the national ensign, and called on all hands to witness the act of taking possession in the name of the United States.

“The ceremony of taking possession over, the howitzers and small-arm men and marines were exercised at target firing. Having hauled the seine and procured an abundant supply of fish, the men cooked their dinner

on shore, and the rest of the day was spent pleasantly, picnic fashion, upon the island. It is exceedingly gratifying to me to have been thus concerned in taking possession of the first island ever added to the dominion of the United States beyond our own shores, and I sincerely hope that this will by no means be the last of our insular annexations. I ventured to name the only harbor at this island after the present Hon. Secretary of the Navy, and to call its roadstead after the present Hon. Secretary of State (Seward)."

The official reports as to the character of this island represent that, with the exception of Honolulu, it possesses advantages for a coaling depot superior to any other place on the line from California to China.

The allusions to this event in Captain Perkins's letters, at that time, are as follows :

"AT SEA, U. S. S. LACKAWANNA,

"August, 1867.

"I received your letters from home by the last mail and should have answered them before leaving Honolulu, but I went into the country to pass a few days, never dreaming that the ship was going to sea ; but on my return I found we were going to leave the next day.

"We are now on our way to survey an island, discovered by Captain Brooks a few years ago, which the Pacific Mail steamship wants for a coal depot, and we shall probably return to Honolulu in about six weeks. Ever since we left there the sea has been very rough, and we have been tumbling about in every imaginable way, and now the old ship is rolling so I can hardly write. I wish I could come home if only for a few days."

"AUGUST 4TH.

"I have been thinking of Roger and Frank all this morning. In Roger's last letter to me, which was written in November, he says, 'In a little while there

will be no more partings.' He was so fond of Frankie that he never recovered from his loss; and now they are *both* gone! It seems so strange and so hard. They were both noble boys, and you could have better spared Hammy or myself.

"It is such a beautiful day it makes me homesick, but we are so far at sea that there is nothing in sight with a shore look. When the ship is in Honolulu I enjoy the best of anything getting a few days off, and going back in the country to the cattle ranches where I get plenty of excitement riding on first-class horses and helping drive in the wild cattle.

"I hope you are saving some of the colts for me. I am glad mother's horse is such a nice one.

"These islands, where we are going, are said to abound in fish, sea fowl, turtles, and turtles' eggs.

"Just now we are sailing along quietly, although we have been greatly startled and had a few moments of terrible anxiety. One of the men, while furling the top-gallant sail, lost his hold and fell overboard. Of course, falling from such a height, we all thought he was killed. The life-buoys were cut away, the ship hove to, and a boat sent for him, which picked him up and found him but little hurt after all. It was such a narrow escape, we were all greatly relieved when we got him aboard all right. Except this, we are sailing along day after day in perfect monotony, and for two months or more we shall not see a strange face or hear a word of news from home. But the weather is delightful, and my health is good. I hope you have good news from Hammy. He is so far away from me that it will take my letters three months to reach him."

"AUGUST 24.

"Breakers have been reported from the mast-head, and I hope it is the island we are looking for. I must go."

“ AUGUST 27.

“ Yes, it proved to be the land we are seeking, and now we are lying at anchor off Brooks’s Island, named after the captain who discovered it a few years ago; and probably never before or since has there been anyone there. It is low and sandy, about six miles long, and its inhabitants are only seagulls and other sea birds, seals, and turtles. Never having seen any human beings before, they are not in the least afraid of us, and we can catch as many of them as we wish. I have been fishing and caught a boatload of fish and eleven turtles, each one of the latter weighing two hundred pounds and over. We are going to remain here and survey the islands, but to-day it has come on to rain, and we are all cooped up on board the ship—a dull prospect for me. I think as I grow older I grow more nervous, and it is hard for me to sit still more than a few minutes at a time. I wish I could keep more quiet, for I think it would be better for me.”

“ AUGUST 28.

“ Pleasant weather has come again and I have been out hunting and fishing. Shot seventeen curlew, hauled the seine, caught a boatload of fish and three large turtles; hunted for shells, but could not find any.

“ We are going to have quite a ceremony, and take possession of the islands for the United States.”

Then follows his description of the ceremony, which I have anticipated in the quotations from Captain Reynolds’s report.

After his cruise in the Pacific my brother was ordered on ordnance duty in Boston, March 19, 1869, and continued in that position until March, 1871,—with the interruption of a month—when he took the new steamer *Nantasket* on her trial trip out of New York.



In September, 1870, he was married to Anna Minot Weld, daughter of William F. Weld of Boston, Mass. His marriage called forth warm and friendly letters from his naval associates. Admiral Bailey writes as follows :

“MY DEAR FRIEND :

“Remembering the support you gave me in battle, and through the hostile mob at New Orleans, I shall accept the invitation to your wedding, and be present to support *you* through this important step in your life.”

January 19, 1871, he was appointed Commander in the Navy. In March, 1871, he was ordered to command the *Relief*, which carried stores from the United States to France, at that time suffering from famine, resulting from the disorders of the Communists.

After an absence of six months, he returned to the Boston navy yard, but was soon after transferred to the position of lighthouse inspector of the Second District, and continued to reside in Boston, which had now become his home. In 1877 he was ordered to China, to take command of the U. S. S. *Ashuelot*. After his arrival, the newspapers spoke of an interesting and valuable report which he sent to the Navy Department, giving the results of his visit and investigations at the newly-opened ports of Hoi-how and Pak-hoi, on the island of Hainaw.

My brother's friends at home were soon gratified at hearing that the admiral of the United States squadron in China was no exception to his other superiors in recognizing his merits as a naval officer. The admiral wrote that it was due to Captain Perkins that he should say that his ship was in the best order and had the best discipline of any ship he ever saw, and he did not believe he ever could see a better one; that he felt *entire confidence* in him, and that he wished other

officers were like him, etc. These kind praises of the admiral greeted my brother from every quarter.

As a station he found Japan preferable to China. The swarming population of the latter gives rise to habits and customs that are repulsive, even disgusting. But it was astonishing to him to journey from city to city, both on the coast and in the interior, where the very names were unknown to Western visitors, and yet these places had inhabitants numbering anywhere from one hundred thousand to four hundred thousand people.

The merchants, and foreign residents of large means, lived in great luxury, far beyond those of their class in most Christian countries, and in Hong Kong, Canton, and Shanghai there is constant and really splendid gayety. Visits of ceremony, dinner parties, and European amusements of all kinds succeed each other perpetually. From Shanghai he went one hundred and fifty miles into the interior on a hunting expedition, which was conducted in a manner different from any in which he had ever participated. The country about Shanghai being level and intersected by rivers and canals, the traveling there is chiefly by boats, and one of the belongings of a wealthy family is what is called a house-boat, which is luxuriously fitted up. Going up into the country in one of these, a hunting party can anchor in the vicinity of the large game which is found on the plains, and carry on their sport with little inconvenience or exposure. From Canton he writes as follows, under date of

“MAY 13, 1877.

“Since I have been here my time has been taken up exchanging visits with both natives and foreigners and going to all the places of interest. Most of the foreigners in China who live at all live very handsomely. They keep up the English customs so far as the climate

will allow, dining at eight in the evening, and the dinner parties and entertainments are very rich and elaborate. The other day in Pack-hoi I went to a Chinese dinner at a Chinese gentleman's house, and there were twenty different courses, two of them being birds-nest soup and shark's fins, which are esteemed such delicacies by the Chinese. We had nothing but chopsticks to eat with.

"Canton is one of the finest of the Chinese cities, and there were a great many pretty things to buy here. Coming up the river from Hong Kong the scenery is beautiful; it reminds one a little of some parts of the Hudson. In many places the hills are terraced and cultivated to their very summits. The manner of working in the fields here has not changed for a thousand years and more. Many agricultural customs spoken of in the Bible are in full force now among these people, and one is constantly reminded of Bible descriptions and allusions.

"These Chinese are the hardest-working and most industrious people I ever saw. They live on a little rice and will work hard all day for ten cents. There are always a great many boats about my ship, pulled by women, who live in them with their children, and who usually have a little baby, which they strap on their backs and carry in that way when they have to row or anything to do. You hardly ever hear a Chinese baby cry. They have a funny custom about their babies. A child does not sit till it is four months old, but on that day the grandmother gives it a gaily-painted chair and some molasses candy; this candy is stuck to the bottom of the chair, and the child is then stuck to the candy! They think that in this way the child learns to sit quietly and will not require to be carried about in the arms. It amuses me to watch them from

the ship, where I can look down upon them and see just how they live. They are continually going through their forms of worship, keeping little sticks burning before their images, making prayers, and setting papers on fire to keep off evil spirits.

“A few days ago I visited the prisons here. They keep the prisoners in pens, as you would an animal, with chains on them, until they are led out to be beheaded or tortured. There is a Temple of Horrors, where they have images representing the different Chinese ways of punishment, and frightfully cruel some of them are.

“To-day I have been to see the hall of the literary examinations, where about ten thousand students have a competitive examination every three years, and as they come with their friends from all over China, it is a time of fun or feasting, like class-day at Harvard, only more so. The hall where the candidates prepare for examination is furnished with little stalls, which are not so good as those we give our cattle, and the candidates are shut in them for three days. They carry in their own food, which is to last them through, and they sleep on a shelf of boards; they are constantly and closely watched, the doors are fastened and sealed, and they are entirely separated from the outside world. This is to prevent their receiving any aid from others in preparing their essays.

“In the children’s schools of the Chinese the customs are just the reverse of ours. They all study out loud, and it sounds like a perfect babel; and when they recite their lessons, they stand with their backs to the teacher.”

From Tientsin, November 9, 1877, my brother writes, describing a trip into Northern China :

“I returned from Peking two days ago, where I

have had a very interesting visit. I met our minister and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Seward, at Hong Kong, and I promised to visit them when I took the *Ashuelot* north. This port being the nearest to Peking, I made my arrangements as soon as I arrived here to accept their invitation, and am very glad I did so, for I have had a delightful visit, and they have been very polite and kind to me.

“The distance from here to Peking is eighty miles, and I went by boat. The Chinese have made this mode of traveling very luxurious, but all other ways of getting about here are uncomfortable enough. They go in rough carts, or in wheelbarrows drawn by mules, and no provision is made for travelers which deserves the name.

“Peking must have been a beautiful city once; but the government is so bad now it is fast going to decay. There was a great deal to see there,—palaces, temples, pagodas, all wonderful, and representing an amount of skill and labor to be found nowhere but in China. Among the photographs which I send you there are two of a monument to Buddha, which, in its way, is the most beautiful thing I ever saw. One of the photographs represents a section of it, and that will show you what the carving is; it is equally fine all over its surface, and it is an *immense* monument. They told me all the life of Buddha was portrayed on it. It is of white marble, and stands on a terrace with a pagoda at each of the four corners.

“The Temple of Heaven seemed to me the finest of the temples, and that is another wonder of elaborate carving in marble. The upper part and the dome are of blue tiles. It stands on a large platform of white marble at the top of three terraces, each one surrounded with white marble balustrades, and with mar-

ble steps, and everything very handsome. You will see in the photograph what an immense furnace is attached to this temple where a whole ox can be burned for sacrifice. In one of the temples is an idol of Buddha sixty feet high—the largest idol in the world. All the buildings, palaces, temples, etc., where the imperial family live or worship, are covered with yellow tiles, which is the imperial color.

“During my whole stay in Peking I was going from one wonderful thing to another, each one worthy of long study by the curious or learned in such matters. I was shown an immense bell that weighed one hundred thousand pounds; it was covered outside and in with Chinese characters, and I do not see how anything so huge could have been cast, and cast at one time, and that over two hundred years ago.

“To show how these Chinese lavish time and labor, you will see, in the photographs I send you of the astronomical apparatus belonging to the Observatory, how the standards and every part are wrought into dragons’ heads and figures, and carved and ornamented. These instruments are kept on a platform on the city wall, and stand exposed to the open air. They were built about two hundred years ago under the superintendence of the Jesuit missionaries, who about that time were in favor with the Chinese Emperor, and accomplished a great deal by their influence.

“We went out on horseback from Peking on an excursion to the great wall. So much has been written about this that I will not undertake to describe it, just leaving it to the photographs to help you out. They will give you some idea how impressive it is to come upon such a work as this in the midst of the roughness and wildness of Northern China. We went to the wall and out through the Nankow Pass. In the

pictures I send you, you will see how the wall runs down here to a savage place between two mountains, where there are rough rocks and boulders heaped all about, as if they had rolled down in an avalanche. In a place like this, think what a surprise it is to find one's self close to an arched opening, and on looking up to see a magnificently-built archway covered with elaborate carving, and crowned with two dragons supporting an image of Buddha?

“Through this Pass goes all the immense trade with outlying China, with Siberia, and with Russia, and all the overland trade of Northern China, and this is all carried on beasts of burden. No carriages, carts, or articles of any sort, are allowed to go through the Nankow Pass, though the need for that law, or for this gateway, or for the wall itself, which was built to protect the original Chinese from the incursions of the Tartars, passed away long ago, when those Tartars conquered the Chinese.

“By the way, I find camels much used in Northern China, though it was a surprise to me to come upon them as I approached Peking. I went through the Pass and had a glimpse of the great Mongolian Plain beyond, where the Tartars herd their flocks, and live in tents and wander about, just as shepherd tribes have done since the days of Abraham. I was sorry my time was so limited that I could not follow on the track of Mr. Williams—the author of one of the best books on China—who traveled all over this plain.

“We found a curious arrangement for a bed in Northern China. They build a brick platform about two feet high, sometimes large enough to accommodate several persons. This is built over a funnel which passes back and forth until it ends in a sort of chimney. The fire is put at one end of the funnel, where it comes

out beneath the brick, and the fire, smoke, and heated air pass back and forth, and out at the chimney, until the bricks of this queer bedstead—which is called a *kong*—become heated, and then the fire is put out, and the servant spreads the bedding—which in China a traveler always carries with him—on the warm surface.

“Returning from the great wall we made a detour to see the tombs of the emperors, or ‘Ming Tombs,’ as they are called; it means the same thing. Ming is Chinese for emperor. I am very glad I have seen them. They were the most singular, the most novel, and the most imposing of anything I have seen at all, well worth making a great effort to visit. They are sixty miles north from Peking, and are situated in a long, sandy plain, encircled by an amphitheatre of high mountains. There they have stood in their lonely grandeur for more than a thousand years, and their state of preservation is wonderful. It is such that it gives you that rare sensation of being suddenly dropped into another world.

“From the entrance-gate to the first tomb there is an avenue of three miles. The avenue gateway consists of five marble archways, supported on pillars, whose bases are carved with lions and dragons, and whose tops support a roof worked up with that strange Chinese elaboration which I have no words to describe. This avenue is formed first by a row of white marble columns on each side; then by lines of sculptured animals of colossal size; and, lastly, by twelve gigantic statues. The lines of animals are the strangest sight,—camels, lions, and winged dragons, immense creatures lying or standing on the barren plain as if petrified there. Their size and immobility are singularly affecting. They are all cut from single blocks of granite.



It is wonderful what work the Chinese do in this hard stone. They use it a great deal; and the time and patience it must require to cut and carve as they do, make one tired to think of.

“The great statues that finish the avenue to the inner gateway are said to be those of the emperors buried there. They are supposed to be dressed like ancient Chinese warriors. Their high square headgear is called a helmet, and something like a cuirass covers the upper part of the figure, but otherwise their garments are long and flowing, and the effect to me was not warlike, but solemn and dignified. They seemed to stand for types of the sages of old, and embodiments of the faith and philosophy of this ancient people.

“At the end of the avenue is another gateway, consisting of a single arch, embellished on the upper corners with huge Chinese lions. The roadway of great flags, which leads through it, and the pathways on each side are in good order and look so fresh that it is hard to believe their date is 830 A. D. Entering this, you perceive that the great tombs are arranged in a semicircle around the valley, and that each tomb is a temple in itself. All around them is a thick growth of evergreen trees, which, though dark and solemn, softens the effect of loneliness which the great, bare plain and the high, rocky mountains give. Just the trees seemed to give a sense of companionship and take away the sense of something weird, and of another world, which was almost oppressive.

“I have spoken of their size. The one that we measured was sixty-seven yards long and twenty-seven yards wide. White and red marble, porphyry, and teak wood, all covered with sculptures, are used in the construction of the tombs. They called my attention to

the pure and severe style of the architecture—different from what is usual in China, but which gives an effect of grandeur. The evergreens give quite a sepulchral shade, and as we stood there in one of the tombs one of their appointed guardians struck loudly on a gong. The noise rang through the halls with curious vibrations, and almost made the flesh creep. They say that the ashes of the emperors were deposited in golden coffins, and in order to keep their final resting place a secret, and secure from robbers, the grave diggers were killed.”

After this visit at Peking, my brother continued in the performance of the routine duties of his station until October, 1878, when he received the following letter from the admiral:

“SIR: When the vessel under your command is in all respects ready for sea, proceed with her on a cruise to the southward as far as Bangkok, visiting, on the way, Kobe, Nagasaki, Foochow, Amoy, Hong Kong, and Manila, and, if practicable, reach Bangkok about the 20th of December next. Thence proceed to Saigon, Pak-hoi, Hoi-how, and return to Hong Kong about the middle of February next. Regulate your stay at each place as American interests may demand.”

On receipt of this, the *Ashuelot* began preparations to go to the southward, and left Yokohama the fourth of October. She visited Kobe and Nagasaki, and investigated the reports as to the existence of cholera. Finding these unfounded, she proceeded to Foochow, where there had been disturbances and riots, in which a missionary's house had been burned. Here a commissioner, favorable to the interests of foreigners, was appointed to settle affairs, and the Chinese made amends. The *Ashuelot* then continued on its way to

Hong Kong, where it was found necessary to “dock” the ship and have her scraped and painted. In that harbor, full of men-of-war of all nations, and with the British government officials and residents, there is a constant exchange of visits and dinner parties and entertainments, which do not make especially interesting records in letters.

On Monday, the second of December, the *Ashuelot* left Hong Kong for Manila, where it remained until the 27th, and the following letter gives an account of a visit to the Philippine Islands :

“AT SEA,

“December 2, 1878.

“Yesterday I left Manila, where I have been since the sixth of this month. Manila, you know, or will if you look on the map, is the capital of the Philippine Islands, and is on the largest of them, which is called Luzon. It belongs to the Spaniards, and the governor is a Spanish Marquis with a very long and high-sounding name, which is, however, quite equalled by those of some of his subordinates. My clerk has written them down in the journal, so you can read them when I get home, but they take up too much room in a letter.

“Our first days there were spent in firing salutes, and exchanging visits, and going through all the forms which are customary when a government vessel comes into a foreign port. Admiral Patterson sent me here to settle a stabbing affray on board the American barque *Masonic*, and that took up my attention at first. In the evenings I went to the opera, and visited the sights of the city. On account of earthquakes, all the buildings are but one story high. The customs, fashions, etc., are Spanish. Every one was polite, and I found it very pleasant ; but, as you might expect,

after a little while I grew restless. I heard that there was some beautiful scenery in the interior, and I resolved to go on an investigating trip and see it. Our vice-consul, Mr. Yongs, and another gentlemen went with me, and we took servants, guides, etc.

“From Manila we went in a boat up a short river, which had its rise in a large lake, about twenty-five miles long, and which we crossed in a steamer. I think I never saw such quantities of two things as were on that lake—namely, ducks and mosquitoes.

“From the lake we continued our journey in two-horse vehicles, like the volantes of Havana, and in these we went from village to village on our way to the mountains. We were very well treated. The Spanish authorities at Manila provided us with papers which commanded the chief men of the villages through which we passed to furnish us with whatever we required. The villages were clusters of thatched huts around a church, and the religion seemed to be a curious mixture of Roman Catholic christianity and pagan superstition, as I concluded from the style of the pictures with which these churches were adorned. These were chiefly representations of hell and its torments. Devils, with the traditional tails and horns, and armed with pitchforks, were turning over sinners in lakes of burning brimstone. I thought from the decided majority of these ‘hell-fire’ pictures that the priests thought fear an important element of the faith.

“We found the natives very musical; they sang, and played on a variety of instruments, and they were quite handsome. The women had, without exception, the longest and most luxuriant hair I ever saw in all my travels. You know it is quite a rare thing among us for a woman to have hair that sweeps the ground, but here the exception is the the other way; nearly

every woman I saw had hair between five and six feet in length !

“ I was told that back among the mountains there existed tribes of Indians whom the Spaniards have never been able to conquer, and no one dares to venture among them, not even the priests. Our road was constantly ascending, and as we advanced towards the interior the scenery became beautiful. Peaks of mountains rose all about us ; plains and valleys stretched out, covered with tropical vegetation ; picturesque villages, clustering around their churches, were visible here and there ; and in the distance were glimpses of the sea, either sparkling and bright in the sun, or ‘ deeply, darkly, beautifully blue.’

“ I was told of a wonderful ravine among the mountains that was worth seeing, and I decided to visit it, especially as it was a favorable time ; the river, by which it had to be approached, was then high, and its fifteen cascades, which usually had to be climbed past, dragging the canoe, were reduced to four. I took three Indians with me, and we ascended successfully. I have called it a ravine, but a ‘ gorge ’ would be a better term, for it is worn directly through the mountain by a large river, and the rock rises up on each side, as sheer and straight as if cut by machinery.

“ After I had ascended a certain distance, I stopped for a time to examine all the wild magnificence about me. The rocky wall on each side was so high that when I looked up I could see the stars shining in that bright noonday, as if it were night. Huge birds came flapping up the gorge far above my head ; and yet they were far below the top of the mountain of rock. I do not know how many feet it rose, but I never saw any precipice where the impression of height was so effectually given—it seemed immense.

“Beneath us was the deep, broad stream, looking very dark in such a twilight as such a shadow made, and I could not help feeling awestruck. But the opening of the gorge framed as smiling and cheerful a landscape as could possibly be devised, to contrast with the inner gloom. It was a wide, varied, and splendid view of the country beyond, sloping to the distant sea, and all of it as aglow with light and color as sea and land could be, beneath a tropic sun.

“Descending the river on our way out, I had a characteristic adventure, which will make me satisfied for a time. We had passed two of the rapids in safety, but as we approached the third, the canoe struck on a rock, or something in the current, bow on, and swinging round, half filled with water. The Indians in the end of the canoe nearest the rock sprang out and clung to the vines which hung over its sides, but the other Indian and I went over the fall in the half-swamped canoe, and were wholly at the mercy of the stream, with an unusually good prospect of getting a good deal more of it.

“The fall once passed through, the current drove us towards the shore, if that is what you would call a precipice of rock, running straight down far below the surface of the water. I succeeded in grasping the vines, and pulling the canoe after me by my feet. The water was quiet close by the rock, and the other two Indians, crawling down to us, hung on with me, and bailed out the boat till it was safely afloat, and then we went down the rest of the way without accident.

“Xmas I passed quietly on board ship till evening, when I went to dine at the consul's. Of course all such holidays are rather sad to me. I am getting old, and it seems as if I should never be at home—already more than half my life has been spent away. We are

now on our way to Bangkok, Siam, where I expect to see more new sights. We shall reach there in about a week, if the weather permits."

For a description of the interesting visit which the *Ashuelot* made at Siam, I make the following extracts from my brother's letters :

"JANUARY 4, 1879.

"Last Wednesday we sighted Palo Obi—a small island near the coast—and passing between that and Cambodia Point, entered the Gulf of Siam, which we were two days ascending. This morning the pilot came aboard at six, and we started ahead for Bangkok, which we reached at noon. We fired a salute, and ran up the Siamese flag at the fore, and soon after anchoring the consul came off to visit us."

"JANUARY 12, 1879.

"I am having a very pleasant visit in this strange part of the world, and if I were younger and could shake off my homesickness I should be greatly entertained. The day after I arrived in Bangkok, the American consul—Mr. Sickles—took me, with some of my officers, to call on the minister of state. He was very polite, and after our visit we received an invitation to be present at a 'Sokan Festival,' as it is called, which was held in honor of the hair cutting of a royal princess.

"It seems the hair of Siamese children is not cut till a certain age, but is worn in a knot at the top of the head, where it is fastened with gay pins and often decorated with flowers. When they are old enough, this knot of hair is cut off, and there is always some ceremony about it, even among the poorest. But this Sokan Festival was in honor of the princess of the highest rank in the kingdom, and the ceremonies were as

splendid and elaborate as it was possible to make them. They last for six days, and are held in a square adjoining the royal palace. Around this square are halls and seats for spectators, according to their rank, and the square itself is covered with puppet shows, booths—I use an English synonym for what I cannot describe in any other way—and refreshment stands, where the people are regaled at the expense of the government. But what was really splendid, and perfectly dazzling to look at, was what was called the ‘*Trailaht*,’ which was seemingly a mountain of gold, on the top of which was a gilt temple, where the final ceremonies of this ‘*Royal Soka Festival*’ took place. On this mountain and about the temple were artificial trees, which were full of automatic birds, monkeys, snakes, etc., and there were pools of water full of artificial fish, and there were images of people moved by machinery, and on the steps of the temple stood Lukuan girls with huge wings attached to their garments, which had some machinery by which they waved them and flapped them about. All the attendants and every one in the temple had these wings, and I was given to understand that within the precincts of the temple everything was supposed to represent heaven.

“The city is crowded with people from every part of the kingdom, who have come to do honor to the occasion. Every afternoon, while the festival lasts, there is a procession around the square, which is one of the great features of the performance. This procession is barbaric and grotesque to a degree, but is also very gorgeous. The mines of this country furnish the finest precious stones in the world, and they flash upon one in great abundance, often in necklaces and bracelets strung together on the necks and arms of naked children. One of the titles of the king of Siam is ‘*Lord of*



the Rubies.' Portions of the procession, I judged, had some national significance. It was composed of men and women, and the costumes of every province of the kingdom were represented; also Chinese and Japanese. There were besides a large number in masquerade. Then there was a military display, and the music consisted both of native music and European bands. The second king has a very good band. Altogether the procession presented as brilliant an appearance as it is possible to imagine.

"The first afternoon that I went with some of my officers to see it, we were given conspicuous seats on the line of the procession, and I was engaged intently watching the strange sight. Of course I wore my uniform, but did not expect any especial notice, having gone as a spectator. The king, in a gilded chair of state, carried by six bearers, constitutes a part of the procession, and when he arrived opposite me, I saw him give an order, and everything came to a full stop. Then a messenger came to me and said that the king wished to see me. I followed the messenger and approached the chair, when the king said to me in a full, clear voice, and in good English, 'What is your mission to this country?' I replied that my mission was a friendly one, that I had only come to express the good-will of the United States to his kingdom, etc.; to which he replied, 'We are very glad to see you,' and signalled for the procession to pass on. I was never more taken by surprise in my life, and felt as if I were enacting a scene in the 'Arabian Nights.'

"Immediately after the king came the gorgeously decorated chair of the Princess Royal. She wore a gold crown, and was covered with gold chains and jewelry, and was attended by a group of ladies who carried the insignia of her rank on gold salvers.

“After the procession had made its circuit, the king took his place in a sort of hall, on one side of the square, which was handsomely decorated and arranged for him, and then he received the Princess Royal, and placed her by his side. Then envoys from all parts of the kingdom, and from neighboring ones, advanced and presented her with gifts. All the noble families of the kingdom also follow this example, and this ceremony is gone through with every day.

“After the royal party was seated, a sort of entertainment began. Some very pretty Siamese women—I was told they were ladies of rank—went through a slow dance, before the king and princess, in which a silver tree was passed from one to the other. They were richly dressed and danced to native music.

“After this, some Lakuan girls, dressed in bright colors, with wings fastened to their shoulders, descended from the gilded temple and danced. It was all very strange and diverting for the time, and I never saw anything so showy and glittering as was the whole scene. I witnessed it several times during the festival, but it was much alike each day.

“Before I go on with an account of my visitings and entertainments I will tell you something about Bangkok. It is on the Meinam Chow Phya River, stretched out about five miles, and contains about five hundred thousand people. These all live on the river, in floating houses built on rafts of bamboo poles and fastened to posts, except the consulates, kings’ palaces, temples, and places of that sort, which require a firm foundation on the land. All these latter buildings are tiled with green and yellow, and have an immense amount of porcelain used in their construction, with elaborate figures of gods and animals adorning them. One temple has four white porcelain elephants, more than half way

up from its base, facing the four points of the compass, and this same temple is hung with little bells from the top of its spire to its base, which have fans for tongues, that catch the wind's slightest movement and ring very sweetly. The roofs of the temples turn up at every angle with a curved and pointed projection, shaped something like a horn and something like an aspiring flame. They would be very beautiful and interesting if they were only clean, but half their beauty is concealed under dirt and slime, and for this same reason all their attractions are made repulsive.

"I find it very warm here, but they say the heat is nothing now compared to the summer. The mornings are the pleasantest part of the day, and then Bangkok seems like a great, active city. The river is covered with boats and there are throngs of people out. The royal boats and those of the wealthy are handsomely decorated, and are a pretty sight, as they dart about on the river, with their high-pointed prows. I was surprised to find so much of the shipping belonging directly to Siamese merchants. Vessels flying the flag of the white elephant were far more plentiful than those of any other nation. It is a very showy flag, but I should think it might present a funny appearance when hoisted as a signal of distress; that is, upside-down.

"On account of so many houses being on the river, some romantic individuals endeavor to dub Bangkok the 'Venice of the East,' but I could not get very enthusiastic over any place so slimy and muddy, and infested with reptiles and insects of every description. The mosquitoes are terrible,—no ordinary protection suffices against them. Snakes are as plenty as frogs. The sailors have to resort to all sorts of devices to keep them out of the boats, both day and night, when we go ashore. The fireflies, though, merit all that has been

said about them. Not only are they the biggest and brightest that I have seen in all my wanderings, but their nocturnal displays are a marked feature among Siamese curiosities.

“Speaking of snakes, our consul told me he had tried to raise chickens in the grounds attached to the consulate, which are in the heart of the city, but could not succeed because boa-constrictors came boldly in, night and day, and carried them off.

“The day after the Royal Soka Festival closed I went to a croquet party at our consul’s, and this was a strong contrast to the gorgeousness of the day before, with its half barbaric procession, succeeded by the dances of a great number of Lakuan girls in rich, high-colored dresses, which made the whole scene one of flashing, shifting splendor.

“The croquet party was as Western as it could be made by English and American residents in so very Eastern a place as Siam. The second king sent his band to enliven it. After the Soka Festival, I paid a series of visits to royal personages and ministers, and to the places of interest about Bangkok.

“The Siamese are polite and gentle in their manners and cordial to strangers, who are rarities. The foreign community here is only about two hundred. The Siamese children are beautiful, and very pretty and attractive in their ways.

“I went to see the ex-regent and the ministers of war and of state. Mr. Sickles, and the king’s interpreter, Mr. Alabaster, took me all over the royal palaces and temples, parts of which are very gorgeous, and all very curious. I had a good look at the famous emerald image of Buddha, which is about a foot and a half high, and said to be carved from a single emerald. The figure sits cross-legged, and is always spoken of

as the 'emerald idol,' but it did not look any better to me than dull, green glass. It is kept in the most splendid of the temples in the king's gardens. His gardens, and those of the minister of state, are beautiful, and in what is called the 'King's Lotus Garden' there are a number of temples and halls of fine architecture, according to Eastern ideas, and of exquisite workmanship. Surrounded as they are by everything rich and tropical, they fulfil one's dreams of an oriental scene. There is a botanic garden and a 'zoo,' both full of fine and rare specimens. I saw the stables where the king's elephants are kept, and also paid a visit to the sacred white elephants, which are only freaks of nature, and though their skin is lighter than common elephants, it is far from white. The sight of the troop of war elephants, in all their trappings and housings of war and glittering with gold and silver, is a magnificent spectacle.

"After I had paid my visits, all those whom I had called upon, including the second king, came and returned the attention, so I had to keep up a firing of salutes and entertaining for two or three days. I also received from the second king and other dignitaries presents of a bear, a monkey, a cat, and an odd sort of a necklace and some other queer things. The monkey is an immense specimen, and we are all afraid of him. The boatswain has him in charge and has dressed him in clothes, and it is a pity some of those Middle Age painters did not have him for a model to paint the devil from, for he is a terrible looking fellow and makes you think of him at once. He is always devising means to get himself free, and then he makes for my cabin, and every now and then he will get in. As monkeys are very imitative, I adopt a course of high politeness, and he proceeds to follow my example, only this does not

prevent him from suddenly seizing some article and flinging it to the floor with a crash while he gives me an engaging grin. As soon as I can, I get word to the boatswain, who comes and captures him. The cat is tailless and of singular color and shape.

“Last Friday arrangements were made for me to visit the first king. Mr. Sickles went with me and some of my officers. We arrived at the palace about four o'clock p. m., when we were met by the king's interpreter, Mr. Alabaster, who conducted us to the king's presence. We passed through a gateway guarded by soldiers, who presented arms in European fashion, and then through a passage, by the harem apartments, where we caught glimpses of dark eyes peering at us. The last hall we passed through, I noticed, was surrounded with busts and portraits of European kings. The next room was a large saloon, and here the king was waiting to receive us, which he did in a most friendly manner. He was dressed in white stockings, reaching nearly to the knee, and low shoes, Siamese trowsers, and a black European frock-coat. He invited us to be seated, and cigars were passed, and then proceeded to talk to us very pleasantly in good English, which he pronounces very carefully. He inquired if we had seen the temples, gardens, and places of interest in Bangkok, and suggested anything interesting that remained for our sightseeing, and made polite inquiries. At the end of about a half an hour we rose to depart, but the king asked us to remain and see some dancing by his Lakuan girls. This was the same brilliant spectacle that I have spoken of before,—the graceful girls moving about in rich, high-colored dresses and jewels, and making a dazzling picture.

“The next day (Saturday) we paid a visit to the second king. All the ceremonies of receiving us were

like those of the day before, except that the surroundings were not quite so fine. This king is bright and agreeable, asked many questions, and seemed much interested about the United States. He invited us to accompany him to the cremation of a nobleman, whose funeral pile he was to honor by applying the torch.

“The place where the ceremony was to be performed was across the river, and we proceeded to it in the royal boats. Here we found the hero of the occasion, namely, the corpse, in a coffin, which rested on a bier of fire-proof masonry. The bier was built in the centre of a square, and the funeral was being celebrated like a festival. Soldiers were parading to music, puppet shows and showmen were performing, and everything looked very bright and gay. We ascended to a sort of veranda on one side of the square, and presently the second king was handed a torch. By his side was a large, artificial crocodile, and when he applied his torch to the tail of this animal, the fire passed through its body and was spit from its mouth, so that it struck the combustible material within the bier, and, igniting the pile, consumed the corpse. This singular firework, I was told, had some religious significance. I have found a good deal of fetich worship among the Siamese that reminds me of my old discoveries in Africa.

“Going to dinner one day with the minister of state, the entertainment lasted till about midnight, and the conversation flowed in an easy manner, as at any gentleman’s table. Dinner finished, the minister showed me the women’s quarters. They were below the state apartments, and we descended first to a sort of court, where a fountain was playing in the centre of a large pool of water. It was surrounded by handsome columns, and, so far as I could see in the dim light, was an elegant and ornamental spot. I was rather startled

when a big crocodile splashed up in the water close by me. The women were asleep in latticed compartments that reminded me of our cattle-cars ; there were passages between, and the ventilation seemed good. The minister is said to be kind to his harem, which comprises about three hundred and fifty women.

“All the great officials returned my visits and came on board the *Ashuelot*, and I have had about all the salutes and ceremony that I can stand. The Siamese greatnesses have names that can only be measured by the yard. The king's is Prabat Somdetch Phra Paramenda Maha Ehulaloukoru. But this is beaten by that of the minister for the Northern Provinces, which is Chow Somdetch Pou Broma Wong-tee-to Chowfah Mahah Malah Krom Pra Bamrap-parapak.”

“JANUARY 19, 1879.

“The time has been filled since I wrote last with sight-seeing and entertainments, and I am too tired to give you much of a description. Mr. Sickles gave us a very handsome reception, and the decorations of the consulate were remarkably fine. The second king sent his band for the occasion, and there was dancing in European fashion to European tunes. The minister of state gave us a garden party, and we sat in a beautiful pavilion and watched the Lakuan girls dance ; and I dined at the British consul's and at the Portuguese.

“The chief event, though, was my trip to Ayuthia, the ancient capital of Siam. It is one hundred miles up the river, and we went in a house-boat, towed by a steam launch, both placed at our disposal by the foreign minister. Ayuthia is ten miles beyond Bang-pa-in, which is the first king's summer residence, and where we stayed, everything being arranged beforehand for our accommodation. Indeed, we had large and handsome



quarters. From there we made an excursion to Ayuthia, of which little remains now but the temples, and those are disgusting with slime and insects and birds, and are falling into rapid decay. The idols are fallen over, and everything is cracked and crumbling that belonged to the old city; but the elephant stockade there is an interesting thing to strangers. The elephants throughout the state are looked upon as the property of the king, and they are not allowed to be killed. At certain times of the year the wild elephants are driven into the stockade by the help of tame ones. There they are kept till subdued, the most intelligent are selected, and the rest turned loose again. They are very useful in Siam, especially in traveling through the country, and they are trained for war purposes, and a variety of uses. The king once proposed sending a number to America and turning them loose in our forests, thinking we might find them as useful here as in Siam; but the offer was declined, with thanks, by our government.

“It is rather dangerous business being about, when the elephants are tamed. The stockade is immensely high and strong, and within it are huge posts to which the beasts are fastened. There is a high platform built for spectators; but when the elephants are being driven in, there is no place which is very safe, but it is a most exciting scene. They tell a great many stories here about the wisdom of the elephants, and what they can be taught, but I did not have time to verify them. The king is trying to make a fine summer resort of Bangpa-in. He is laying out the grounds about his palace in artificial lakes and grottos, and is making use of a good many European ideas in his architecture and gardening. He is intending to build villas, and a church for the use of visitors.

“In the great statues of granite about the kings’ pal-

aces and temples, and in much of the solid work done for the past kings, I am reminded of old Chinese stonework, and have an idea the same class of workmen must have been employed. I did not stay long enough to make much of a study of Siam; but it seemed to me to be a very interesting problem.

“There is an odd mixture of Western ideas, and an interest in Western matters, which is not found in other Oriental countries. They all speak English well, in what I might call the court circle, and there certainly must have been some rulers here of marked ability and of active minds. I heard much admiration expressed for the United States, and they were eager to hear about it. One of the princes is named George Washington.”

“AT SEA,

“January 21, 1879.

“I am now on my way to Saigon. Have been interested in having target practice, and in testing the speed of the ship. I took on board, for first-class boys, two of the nephews of the foreign minister, at his request. I had to return the huge monkey with which I was presented in Siam. He proved intractable, and was a terror to most of the seamen. I sent him back with the most polite explanations I could think of.

“I forgot to mention that at the consul’s reception I met the wife of a missionary who was a very intelligent, sensible woman, and found in talking with her that she had been at school with Aunt Anne, and with Mrs. Jewell, when they and she were girls. It seemed very odd to talk to an American woman about such things and such people in the centre of the kingdom of Siam. Naturally, as an American missionary, this lady was greatly interested in the *Ashuelot* and everything on board. She found out everything about me, and pub-

lished some very complimentary things in the *Siam Advertiser*, which I send you."

The notices in the *Advertiser* of January, 1879, are as follows :

"The visit of the U. S. S. *Ashuelot* to our port was a rich treat to the foreign residents, and especially to the American community, who had good reason to be proud of the noble men who have cheerfully exposed their lives in defence of their country and compatriots in all parts of the world.

"The captain, George H. Perkins, is an historic character, and his heroic deeds in the service of his country, in crushing the late rebellion in the United States, made him an object of much interest. His very modest and unassuming manners made him all the more a great favorite.

"Were Stanley about to visit us, we should receive him as a hero, and feel there should be an ovation in his honor. He traveled amid great dangers, and was a pioneer in the most arduous and perilous enterprise. When General Grant comes here, every one will be eager to honor him, not only because he was president, but for his efforts in putting down a great rebellion.

"Are we aware that in Captain Perkins of the *Ashuelot*, Bangkok entertained a hero, combining in himself the interests which we centre both in Stanley and in General Grant?

"Captain Perkins was engaged three years in Africa, before the last American war, in putting down the slave-trade, and was an explorer up the very Congo river which at present claims so much attention. He was a very prominent man in the United States navy throughout the struggle in putting down the rebellion. He was the first to steam through those hot lines of defence on

both sides of the Mississippi, to enter New Orleans, and demand the city's surrender. He was a great favorite of the renowned Farragut, and was with him in his most prominent battles. In the following article on the taking of Mobile, there is evidence which shows that Captain Perkins is really the man who decided the victory for the loyal side."

Here follows an extract from Captain Parker's book on the battle of Mobile.

Again the *Siam Advertiser* says :

"It is a pleasure to see such intelligent service as one witnesses on board the *Ashuelot* where everything is done with a will. Captain Perkins, by his genial, hearty manner, good common-sense, and quick and ready tact, has won for himself high consideration in a short space of time, and great regret is expressed that his orders called him away so soon and compelled him to decline much hospitality. The trip to Ayuthia, the dinners at H. B. M.'s consulate, and at the foreign minister's, concluded the festivities in honor of Captain Perkins."

"WEDNESDAY, February 5, 1879.

"We are now steaming up the Gulf of Tonquin, and so along the coast to Hong Kong. After coming down the Gulf of Siam, we rounded Cambodia Point, and went to Saigon in Cochin-China. Saigon belongs to the French. Rear Admiral Lafont is the governor-general, and there were three naval vessels in the harbor, and several small gunboats. The town is regularly laid out, and seemed fairly clean, and has a population of five thousand Europeans besides the Chinese, or, more properly, Anamese.

"If I thought Siam a terrible place for beasts and

insects, I do not know what to say of Saigon and its surroundings. Snakes of the worst description abound, and as for tigers they infest the country, and are very bold. One carried off the lighthouse keeper the other day, and as they soon become man-eaters, you are never safe from them. There is only one American resident in Saigon, and there is no trade with us; but the exports of rice are very large. There is an arsenal, dock-yard, coal depot, etc., and everything for supplying and building vessels, and the revenues support the government well. I received visits and civilities from the French officers, and was entertained at dinner by Admiral Lafont at the Government House, but did not regret leaving very much. If you look up Saigon on the map, you will find it in Cochin-China, just on the borders of Anam.

“It seems strange enough to steam along this coast, to stop at these populous cities, and see all this strange and teeming life, of beasts as well as human beings, all so different from each other, and so wholly different from what one is in the habit of considering and comprehending. It seems as if I were in a dream.

“Just before coming here, we went into Touron Bay on the coast of Anam. You will not find this on ordinary maps, but it is quite a large bay and town, nevertheless. We found the inhabitants in a terrible state of destitution, owing to the failure of last year's crops. There were two vessels of war in the bay flying the Anamese flag, but they were falling to pieces; and there were two barques, one French and one English, which had brought cargoes of rice. About the bay were villages with starving people and there was no trade, and all was dilapidated and forlorn. We have been detained somewhat by unfavorable weather, but to-morrow expect to make the harbor of Pak-hoi.”

“ FEBRUARY 11, 1879.

“ Look to the left of the Gulf of Tonquin, and you will see the island of Hainan. It is a large island, and has a million of inhabitants. I visited it when I first came out, and sent home a report about it. It is almost unknown to us, and is difficult of access anyway. The people are hostile to strangers, and in the interior they are perfect savages and are fierce. The island was in a state of commotion owing to a feud between two powerful clans. Imperialist troops had been sent from China, but they had been well beaten, and were waiting for reinforcements. There was, of course, no trade and no shipping in the harbors, either of Pak-hoi or Hoi-how. There are five white persons at Pak-hoi and twelve at Hoi-how. The ports were only open to foreign trade about two years ago. The number of savages in the interior is four thousand. Everything was paralyzed by the warlike state of things, but they say the increase of trade since the Chefoo convention has been very marked. We have just passed through Now Chow channel on our way to Hong Kong, and are steaming along among numerous islands. We are not having much good weather, and the rain and mist deprive us of much fine scenery.”

“ HONG KONG, March 12, 1879.

“ My life now is such an exchange of saluting and visiting and naval ceremony that I feel tempted to give you a little journal of it, for it will do you inland people good to know more about a man-of-war.

“ Wednesday, February 12, we passed Green Island and arrived off the tower in Hong Kong harbor. We fired salutes to the port and the English and French admirals. Our salute is returned by the shore battery, the English man-of-war *Ironduke*, and the French man-of-war *Armide*.

“The next day the commanding officers of the ships of war in the harbor call on me ; then the consuls from various nationalities pay me visits, which are always recognized with a salute ; then I send an officer and begin investigating the shipping and everything that comes within my province to attend to, in connection with American interests. In the meantime mails, official and otherwise, are arriving, reports are to be made out, inquiries coming from the admiral, meteorological blanks to be filled up, and countless duties, naval and otherwise. Invitations come from dignitaries for various entertainments.

“Monday, February 16, I went to the races, which are attended by the governor and his wife, and all the fashion of Hong Kong. February 22d we dressed ship ‘rainbow,’ as it is called, in honor of the day, and as I had invited the English and French ships to participate, they also dressed ships, American ensign at the main. This was at sunrise. Then at noon we fire a salute of twenty-one guns, and so did the shore battery, and the English and French men-of-war.

“February 24th the English troop-ship *Himalaya* arrived with the Twenty-fourth regiment, called the Inniskillings, which has come to relieve the Seventy-fourth. In the course of time the officers of the regiment pay me visits, and my evenings are filled with dinners, with the different admirals and officials. Nearly every day ships of war come in. A German one has just arrived from Singapore. A Japanese corvette, the *Seiki*, has also arrived lately, after an absence of a year, being the first Japanese man-of-war ever sent to Europe from Japan. Sir Thomas Wade and suite, arriving by the English mail, are received with salutes, and provided with a guard of honor.”

“ MARCH 19, 1879.

“ You must not expect anything but skeleton letters from me after this, just the merest journals, for to-day the mail brought me my detachment from the *Ashuelot*, as soon as Captain Johnson should report. I may be here much longer, perhaps two months, but I shall be so excited preparing for and thinking about coming home, that I shall be too impatient to write much. My navigating officer, Lieutenant Chipp, was detached and sailed for home the 17th. He is a splendid officer, and I shall feel his loss greatly if I am here much longer.\* That same day was St. Patrick's day, and the governor of Hong Kong, being of Irish descent, gave a dinner party and reception in its honor, which I attended with my officers.”

“ MARCH 29, 1879.

“ Just as the time comes for me to leave China, I am picking up acquaintances and ceasing to feel so much of a stranger. To-day I dined at the Forbes's, successful American merchants here, who live delightfully, and whose hospitality is refreshing, after all the foreign ceremonies I have to go through. The harbor is filling up with English men-of-war, and dining and exchanging visits, and saluting, are incessant.

“ News has come that General Grant and his suite will arrive here about the middle of April. The *Vigilant*, the *Victor Emanuel*, the *Ironduke*, the *Junco*, the *Sheldrake*, the *Charybdis*, and the *Moorhen*; the French vessels *Armide* and *Champlain*, and ten Oriental mail steamers, are in port just now.”

“ WEDNESDAY, April 30, 1879.

“ The French mail steamer *Irawaddy* has just come in flying the American ensign at the main, with Gen-

\* This was the Lieutenant Chipp who lost his life in De Long's ill-fated Arctic Expedition in the *Jeannette*.



eral Grant and suite on board. They are coming to visit this ship. It has been arranged that the General on leaving the *Irawaddy* shall first come here and remain forty-five minutes. He is to be brought here by the steam launch *Victoria*."

"APRIL 22, 1879.

"I will describe to you a little what has been going on with reference to General Grant and his reception here, while I have a little quiet. His arrival was announced by a gun from the Peak, in time for most of the shipping in the harbor to dress ship, and it made a pretty sight. When the *Irawaddy* came in, all the ships dipped flags, and the mail steamer acknowledged it. Then quite a party, including all the prominent American officials in China, went on board the mail steamer to receive the General. The next move was to come to the *Ashuelot*."

I quote an account of this visit from the Hong Kong papers :

"At five minutes to four the double party, consisting of General Grant and suite, and those who were calling upon him, entered the *Victoria*, and proceeded to the U. S. S. *Ashuelot*. The gallant General, on setting his foot on the deck, over which floated the stars and stripes, received a salute of twenty-one guns, and the national flag was run up at the fore and the yards manned. [We may here mention that General Grant is the only living American—the President excepted—who is entitled to this honor of the flag at the fore.] General Grant was then introduced to Captain Perkins, and introductions ensued between the entire party and the officers of the ship.

"Captain Perkins and his officers, in full uniform,

received the General and party near the gangway. The seamen and marines, who presented arms to the General, were formed on deck. The whole vessel seemed in beautiful order and condition, everything shining as brightly as a new pin. Captain Perkins, giving his arm to Mrs. Grant, then led the party from the quarter-deck and offered them refreshments. The time allotted for their visit to the *Ashuelot* was three quarters of an hour. Captain Perkins then escorted his visitors on board the *Victoria*, which, lying to, until the General had received the salute of departure of twenty-one guns,—the marines presenting arms, and the seamen manning the yards,—steamed slowly towards Murray Pier. The Japanese corvette *Nisson* then saluted.”

“MAY 4, 1879.

“I have sent you papers from Hong Kong giving an account of General Grant’s arrival and stay of a few days. As he and his party wished to visit Canton, the *Ashuelot* has been chosen to carry them, and I expect to have a busy time. They have been handsomely entertained here by the English, and there has been a great deal of visiting and dining and decorating. The General gets up early mornings and walks about the city and seems to take in everything. I am a good deal impressed by him. I never saw less airs or pretension, which I believe is like all really great men.

“I was interested in hearing from Grant’s party, all about their visit at Bangkok, as I had been there so recently. The Siamese government had sent a steamer to take the General’s party from the mail steamer, but the latter had run aground and was sticking in the mud down the gulf. An awful storm came on, and everybody on the mail steamer was drenched through. Finally the officers on the government launch got

anxious, and started down the gulf to explore, and found the General's party in a dismal condition. The party was large for the steam launch, and everybody was wet and crowded and uncomfortable. The rain poured and there were heavy squalls, and they had to be transferred in boats. After getting under way the party were very mad to find that two Boston 'globe-trotters,' as they called them, had, with the characteristic cheek of persons from that locality, crowded unperceived into the General's party without leave or license.

"The General and his party said that they were magnificently lodged in Bangkok, and they were enthusiastic about their visit. The king had a display of war elephants for them, and they were given a ball, a trip to Ayuthia, and had every attention during their visit of six days—only the weather was rainy. I extract from the Hong Kong *Press* the following description of General Grant's visit to Canton :

" 'On Monday, May 5, General Grant and party left Hong Kong on a visit to Canton and the Portuguese colony of Macao. They arrived at Murray Pier shortly before eight o'clock, accompanied by Governor and Mrs. Hennessey, and the government steam launch being ready, they embarked for the U. S. S. *Ashuelot*, Captain Perkins. Having saluted the General with twenty-one guns on his stepping aboard, the *Ashuelot* left her moorings for the "City of Rams."

" 'Upon gaining the quarter-deck of the *Ashuelot*, Captain Perkins, in an elegant little speech, presented Mrs. Grant with a magnificent bouquet sent on board by the American shipmasters at present in Hong Kong. Mrs. Grant thanked her countrymen for their kind attention, and Captain Perkins for the complimentary manner in which it was conveyed to her.

““The weather, on leaving, was anything but pleasant, and the rain squalls and gusts of wind were such as to drive most of the party below. This weather continued for some time, but when approaching Ma-chow, it began to clear, and by the time the *Ashuelot* reached the island of Suichan at about noon, the sun shone out, and a cool breeze blowing made it very pleasant on deck.

““It seemed to be well understood on the river boats and Chinese gunboats that were encountered on the way up that the *Ashuelot* carried a distinguished personage, as the dipping of the ensign was never omitted in a single instance, and on the arrival of the steamer near Chuempee she was met by a Chinese gunboat specially sent to escort the *Ashuelot* up the river, the Chinese admiral at Canton sending down his card to General Grant.

““At certain points of the river, salutes were fired as the vessel passed up, and at Anunghoy Island, the batteries were manned by troops, who displayed their banners, while at Wantong hundreds of flags of every color, floating on staves stuck in the ground, and backed up by the green hills, presented a very gay appearance. At half-past one the captain and officers of the *Ashuelot* entertained the distinguished party at tiffin, which was in this case a most sumptuous banquet.

““Soon after five o'clock, when at the bottom of Whampoa Reach, the *Ashuelot* was boarded by the captain of the Viceroy's gunboat *Tsing-po*, accompanied by two mandarins, bearing the cards of the Viceroy of Canton, the Tartar General, the Governor of Canton, the Provincial Judge, and the Intendant of Customs. Salutes were fired, the *Tsing-po* manned yards, and the *Ashuelot* was hove to. After the mandarins had fulfilled their mission, they left the *Ashuelot*, which proceeded on its journey.

“‘At nine o’clock she reached Shameen, having been delayed by wind and tide. Here there was a great display of lanterns at the consulate, and twenty war junks, anchored in line opposite, were illuminated. The Chinese gunboats also illuminated and burned signal lights and fired rockets in answer to the *Ashuelot*. The United States consul then came off to the steamer and General Grant and party returned with him to the consulate.

“‘At the landing place of Shameen a mat erection had been raised, which was wreathed with green and tastefully decorated with pot plants and ferns, and a large display of bunting. It was too late to carry out the arrangement which had been made for a reception, and this, therefore, did not take place in a formal manner, but a great number went down to meet the party as they landed, and the ‘three cheers’ given, as the General appeared on Shameen, must have been heard over the greater part of Honan.

“‘At eight o’clock on Tuesday, salutes were exchanged by the *Ashuelot* and the Chinese gunboats, and the *Ashuelot* was kept constantly saluting throughout the morning by Chinese displays of bunting. At the consulate, the General and his party received visitors. At ten o’clock, the General and his party, and the captain and officers of the *Ashuelot*, went to pay a visit to the Viceroy at his Yamen. They went in chairs, and the party were headed by mounted mandarins and a body of troops. Traffic had been stopped, and each crossing, or end of a street, was kept by troops. This was necessary, as the pressure to get a sight of the illustrious warrior and statesman was in some places tremendous, and it was as much as the soldiers could do to keep the crowd back. The distance from the United States consulate to the Viceroy’s

Yamen is three miles, and the whole route was lined by Chinese, to the number of tens of thousands. General Grant said he never saw such a line of faces, and his estimate is, that at least a hundred thousand persons saw the procession of chairs pass by.

““ On arriving at the Ti Ping Gate, the General was saluted in Chinese fashion, and this salute was repeated on entering the city at the Qui Dehr Gate. On arriving at the gate of the Viceroy's Yamen, a salute of twenty-one guns was fired, and the party filed through two lines of Tartar troops armed with rifles. These presented arms in European fashion,—as was also done on passing the city boundary,—and the word of command was given in English. The chairs were deposited inside the Yamen proper, and here four or five hundred military, and other mandarins, lined the approach to the Viceroy and his suite.

““ The party were then introduced according to their rank to the Viceroy, the Governor General, and the Acting Governor of Canton ; to the Tartar General, the Imperial Commissioner, the Deputy Tartar General, and the Assistant Tartar General. The party being received by the Chinese officials, the Viceroy himself led General Grant to a seat. The officials distributed themselves among the foreigners, while the party were being seated in a semicircle in the reception-room. By the side of each guest was placed, on massive tea-poy, in delicate Chinese cups, tea made *à la Chinoise*, and a lively conversation took place between the principal officials and principal visitors, which was interpreted by Mr. Chester Holcombe, *charge d'affaires* of the United States, who had come from Peking to welcome General Grant ; and by the Chinese interpreter attached to the United States consulate at Canton.

““ The Chinese mandarins were cordial in their man-

ner and laid aside much restraint. They wore the different buttons of their rank, and the Viceroy had an extra batch of *aides-de-camp* in attendance. At the sounding of a bell, the Viceroy rose and conducted General Grant to another apartment, which was, however, so distant that it required about a five-minutes' walk to reach it. The party and officials formed a procession, with due regard to precedence, and marched to a room where refreshments had been laid on a large table in a very handsome apartment. Seats had been placed for the exact number of guests, whose cards had been sent early in the morning, and when all were arranged in place, the sight presented was a very fine spectacle, as will be easily imagined,—the naval, military, and consular uniforms contrasting well with the rich dresses of the Chinese, and the throng of at least three hundred servants in fresh costumes, of different nationalities, forming the background. With the exception of the glasses and knives and forks, all the material of the table was Chinese, and consisted of the finest of that ceramic ware for which China is so celebrated. The Viceroy pledged his guests repeatedly, and seemed to enjoy his Clicquot. After about eighty dishes had been discussed, and tea had again been served, a signal was given by the Viceroy, and each guest was presented with his hat by a servant, while other servants brought lights, and cigars being handed round, the procession reformed and returned to the reception-room, where the visitors took their leave. General Grant's party returned to the consulate by the same route as they came, receiving the same salutes.

“On the evening of this day (Tuesday) invitations to dinner for Wednesday were received at the consulate from the Viceroy for the same party who visited him Tuesday afternoon. On Wednesday morning the Vice-

roy and other officials called upon General Grant at the consulate. The Tartar General came first, with an escort of attendants and Tartar soldiers. He came in a chair and his *aides-de-camp* were mounted on stout little ponies. He took his leave at the end of half an hour, and about ten o'clock the noise of gongs and loud shouting announced the approach of the Viceroy. His procession presented quite an imposing appearance as it advanced through the trees from the east gate. The other military mandarins succeeded him, and the visiting continued till about two, after which the Shameen returned to its usual quiet.

“ ‘Mr. Lincoln, the United States consul at Canton, entertained a party at tiffin to meet General Grant, and at five in the afternoon the General and suite, and Captain Perkins and two of the officers of the *Ashuelot*, left the consulate in chairs for the Viceroy's Yamen, where they were to be entertained at dinner. The heat was very great, and for the naval and military men in uniform and civilians in evening dress the journey in chairs of three miles to the Yamen was expected to be a severe task; but, fortunately, a cool breeze sprang up, and, clouds obscuring the sun, the atmosphere became comparatively cool, and they traveled comfortably.

“ ‘The marines of the *Ashuelot* marched in front of the party, and the route, as on the previous day, was kept by soldiers, while the crowd was nearly as great. The salutes of the previous day were also repeated. It was getting towards dusk when the party arrived at the Yamen, and a crowd of servants were lighting up the palace. The effect of the thousands of tiny lamps, with here and there enormous lanterns, lighting the halls and rooms to the top of their vaulted ceiling, was beautiful, and a single glance brought to the mind at once whole chapters of the “Arabian Nights.”



“ ‘The Yamen and its premises are of great extent, and the attendants on the high officials and the attendants on the guests, and the servants attached to the place, were so numerous that they could be numbered by hundreds. They were all dressed in silk and rich materials of various colors, which added to the brilliancy of the scene. The Viceroy and five of the highest officials received the guests, and after the ceremony of shaking hands and much kotowing was gone through with, the Viceroy led the way to a large apartment where seats were arranged in a semicircle. Here tea was served while the guests were fanned cool by a row of servants with palm-leaf fans, one of whom stood behind each seated guest. Soon after “the chimes of silver-sounding bells” announced dinner, and the party, forming a stately procession according to rank, marched slowly through several courts and corridors, crossed an illuminated garden, and ultimately reached the dining-hall.’ ”

I quote now from my brother's letters :

“The scene here was brilliant beyond description. The dining-hall was more brilliantly illuminated than any apartment we had previously visited. It opened on three sides to the garden, which was also lighted, and the tables were arranged in rows on these three sides of the room. They were loaded with exquisite china and glittering with massive silver. In the centre of the room, and in the garden beyond, moved about hundreds of servants in bright, gay-colored dresses. Each table was laid for about six persons, which included one or two Chinese who spoke English.

“The Chinese young men of rank who were present were very handsome; nobody could have thought of

them as belonging to an inferior race in any way, and although they were very polite and did everything that the occasion and its ceremonies required of them, yet it seemed to me that they could hardly conceal the thought that we were of a much inferior race to themselves, and they put a restraint on themselves to help showing their contempt for *us*.

“Everything about the dinner was Chinese except the knives and forks and glasses. Chopsticks of carved ivory and silver were also at every plate. The dinner—I was told by those who knew—was a combination of Chinese and Mantehu cookery. They say that in suggestions to appetite and appeals to luxurious living the Chinese surpass Europeans in the arrangement of their feasts; that these are intended as works of art, and that every course is planned with a purpose and intention with regard to the appetite. I have heard that there were French cooks who claimed the same merit for their dishes and dinners. The dinner was very interesting, as most of the dishes were calculated to excite the curiosity of a foreigner.

“Before appealing to the Chinese gentlemen at the table to explain them to us, we would make attempts to guess what the dishes were. I should think there were a hundred courses, and you will find them enumerated in the newspaper accounts which I send. The *menu* was in gold characters on red paper.”

From a newspaper I copy that part of the bill of fare which includes the most curious dishes :

“The banquet began with sweetmeats, cakes, fruit-rolls, apricot and melon seeds, passed in little dishes; then eight courses of meats, fish, and vegetables; then fruits, cakes, preserves, and honey; then birds-nest soup, roast duck, mushrooms, pigeons’ eggs, shark fins,

and seacrats; then, succeeding each other, steamed cakes, ham-pie, vermicelli, baked white pigeons, stewed chicken, lotus seeds, pea-soup, ham in honey, radish cakes, date cakes, sucking pigs (served whole), French confectionery, bellies of fat fish, roast mutton, pears in honey, the soles of white pigeons' feet, wild ducks in thorn-apple jelly, egg-balls, lotus seed soup, roast chicken, fruit and vegetables, Mongolian mushrooms, sliced flag-bulbs, fried egg-plant, salted shrimps, orange tarts and cakes, prune-sauce, biche-de-mer, ham with white and with red sauce, ham combined with pumpkins and squash, almonds and beans, and so on beyond count. Cigars and pipes were constantly passed, and the Chinese showed themselves familiar with European liquors.

“The bill of fare was very handsome; the representations in gold or red being emblematic of good wishes for the happiness, honors, and longevity of the guest. The dinner occupied an unconscionable time. Many smoked water-pipes, held by the servants who attended for the purpose, while General Grant and Mr. Borie walked about the garden between some of the courses. At last, the dinner finished, the company adjourned to another apartment, and after a little time spent here, they reformed in order of precedence, returned to the reception-hall, and soon after the guests took leave and returned to the consulate. A Chinese state dinner is certainly a thing to be remembered.

“The evening of the next day (Thursday) Captain Perkins and other officers of the *Ashuelot* attended a dinner at the United States consulate, where an elaborate dinner was given in English style, with speech-making and complimentary addresses to the honored guest; while the consulate was made a mass of beautiful decorations in flowers and bunting, and the whole

was concluded by a display of fireworks from a bamboo erection of sixty feet in front of the house, where there were scenic representations in the finest Chinese style.

“Friday morning, May 10, General Grant and party went on board the *Ashuelot* and started for Macao. The Viceroy sent magnificent presents, and expressed a desire to come and see them off; but they started too early in the morning. As the *Ashuelot* proceeded down the river, the same saluting and ceremonies were observed as on her ascent. Chinese gunboats met her at different points with mandarins bringing cards of the different officials. The same military display was made at the Amunghoy and Wantong batteries. Salutes were fired from each side of the river, which were returned gun for gun from the *Ashuelot*.

“On arriving off the bay at the back of Chuenkee, a line of war junks were also at anchor; it was hardly to be expected that these would salute, but not to be outdone in compliments to the General, they blazed away, and the gunners of the *Ashuelot* were again piped to quarters for saluting, which was the last of the powder burning, coming down the Canton river.

“As they approached Macao, the fine view of the Portuguese peninsula was obscured by a cloud of mist. Here saluting began again, and soon a steam launch came alongside with the Portuguese governor and other officials. The General and party went to the hotel at Macoa, where they passed the night, and the next morning visited the grotto of Camoens and fantan. At the entrance of the garden of Camoens, an arch was raised, bearing, in English, the words, ‘Welcome to General Grant.’ The General seemed to enjoy the much needed rest he obtained here, and on Saturday morning the *Ashuelot*, with the General’s party on board, steamed out of the harbor, receiving and returning salutes. She

expects to arrive in Hong Kong in season for the grand Chinese chow-chow dinner and garden party."

When the *Ashuelot* reached Hong Kong, it was found that Commander Johnson, who had been appointed to succeed Captain Perkins in command of the *Ashuelot*, had arrived, and the latter lost no time in going through the ceremony of transferring the ship to him, in order to be free for immediate departure for his beloved home.

In the Hong Kong papers of Monday, May 12, appeared the following :

"Captain Perkins gave up the command of the U. S. S. *Ashuelot* on Saturday afternoon to Captain Johnson, who arrived the same day on the P. M. steamer *Alaska*. We hope the new commander will be as popular during his term as has been Captain Perkins, both afloat and ashore. He leaves Hong Kong in the afternoon steamer *City of Tokio* for San Francisco."

The following is a letter from John Russell Young, the well-known author and newspaper correspondent, who accompanied General Grant :

"HONG KONG, May 13, 1879.

"DEAR CAPTAIN :

"I think I will accept your offer to carry my package of photographs to the United States. If you will have them put in the express office in California, and mark them C. O. D., I will be very much obliged. I hope it will not be too much trouble ; but I have already had so much kindness from you that I am tempted to tax you further, in the hope that when we meet in America I may have the opportunity of, in a slight degree, repaying it.

"Yours faithfully,

"JNO. RUSSELL YOUNG."

In 1880 there was a decided effort again made to induce the government to recognize the services of those naval officers who had distinguished themselves during the Rebellion ; and the following letter is a specimen of several which George received with reference to the matter. Such letters have a value to his friends, as they show the estimation in which he was held by those capable of appreciating his merits and his deserts :

“ MARE ISLAND, CAL.,

“ March 18, 1880.

“ MY DEAR PERKINS :

“ It is seldom I venture to give advice, or offer suggestions concerning other people’s affairs, but the senate’s action in Jewett’s case has opened afresh the old sore of Farragut’s injustice to those officers who served under him so faithfully at Mobile ; and this circumstance has induced me to depart from my rule, and urge you to demand your right and claim the promotion your services entitle you to.

“ Your war record, prior to the fifth of August,\* is well known to most of the older officers in the service, and your fight with Buchanan in Mobile Bay should have been rewarded by advancement to a higher grade. This is not my opinion alone, but that of all the officers who participated in that action. Admirals Strong, Le Roy, Jenkins, or, in fact, any of the old commanders in Mobile Bay, could, and doubtless would, recommend your promotion. I have no other object in this suggestion than a wish to see justice done, and I offer you my services most heartily.”

At about this time I began to collect and arrange the letters and papers belonging to my brother. Request had been previously made at various times for such of

\*That is, at New Orleans.

these as I might have, which bore upon my brother's part in the war. But I was chiefly stimulated to make an effort for their arrangement and preservation by Capt. George E. Belknap's expressed desire to write a sketch of my brother's life.

Captain Belknap came from New Hampshire, and stands high in the naval profession, being distinguished for his connection with the scientific labors of the service and for his literary attainments. Though in an older class than my brother, he writes :

“I took a fancy to your brother when we were at the Naval Academy together. His career all through since that time has strengthened my regard, and I shall be only too glad to help preserve his fame and make his deeds better known to the people of our own state, who have too much overlooked what their naval representatives did during the war.

“The writing of the sketch will be a labor of love on my part. I feel that your brother's admirable service can only be done justice to by one versed in naval ways and matters. Then, too, besides the personal regard I have for him, a feeling of state pride enters into my desire to do the work.

“Pray send me extracts from his correspondence with regard to New Orleans. I think the passage of the forts and the capture of New Orleans more important in the results at the time than the battle of Mobile ; and your brother's part in it was most brilliant.

“Some day an historian will write New Hampshire's part in the war, and then your brother's letters pertaining to it, both as to personal experience and opinion, will be valuable to coming generations. They ought to be edited and placed on file with the New Hampshire Historical Society.

“I am glad to hear such pleasant news of your

brother Hamilton.\* Your mother will begin to think she rears boys only for Massachusetts girls to carry off! But then with such boys as hers, she can only be proudly content! Both your brothers have been nominated for the Historic-Genealogical Society of Boston, and I hope they will accept."

When preparing that part of his sketch descriptive of the battle of Mobile Bay, Captain Belknap writes :

"My manuscript does not include all that is to be said of Mobile Bay, and I have thought of writing and asking your opinion of a separate sketch to be entitled, 'Captain Perkins at Mobile Bay.' With regard to all the histories, monographs, etc., about it, I think your brother may well exclaim with Walpole, 'Anything but history, or history must be false!'"

In a letter thanking me for my assistance in furnishing information, data, etc., for his sketch, Captain Belknap says :

"Fortunate as your brother has been in all that he has undertaken, his letters show the source of his inspiration and success,—a happy home, where he ever found love and sympathy and praise and appreciation, wherever they were due. Not all have been so happily circumstanced, else the world would have seen more heroes and better men."

In April, 1884, Captain Belknap's sketch of George's life and services to his country was published in the *Bay State Monthly*, afterwards called the *Massachusetts Magazine*, and was reprinted in the *Granite Monthly*. After its publication, Captain Belknap received many letters from naval officers expressing the satisfaction with which they read his account of the

\* His marriage to Miss Bliss, of Boston, about this time.



deeds of one of their number. He kindly sent some of these letters to me, and I give extracts from them here :

“I received with much pleasure the *Bay State Monthly*, and read with peculiar interest your eloquent sketch of the life and services of Capt. George Hamilton Perkins. In these prosaic times I fear that services like those of Captain Perkins are passing rapidly from the memory of our people, and, I fear, from that of our own comrades.

“Your pen has furnished a truthful narrative of one who deserves to be singled out for the distinguished part he bore in the great conflict, and I, for one, thank you for it. How well Captain Perkins bore himself at the battle of New Orleans, you have gloriously set forth.

“I wish that a naval record might be made, in whose pages could be found the acts of heroism and self-devotion of those who go down to the sea in ships. It is right that their deeds should be noted; that now, and in time to come, they may warm the hearts and fire the blood of their countrymen, and win for them the merited love and admiration which are their due.”

Another friend and officer writes :

“You have only expressed in fitting terms what I have always understood, that in any other country Captain Perkins would have received handsome recognition from the government. Had he been less of a true hero he would have demanded it loudly; but he was always modest. I know a gentleman, a near connection of Perkins, by marriage, who told me that as long as he had known George, and as intimately, he had never heard him allude to the Mobile fight, or indeed to any of his active services during the war.”

In March, 1882, my brother received his appointment

as captain in the navy by regular promotion. In the years of 1884-'85, he made a year's cruise in command of Farragut's famous old *Hartford*, then flagship of our Pacific squadron.

The cruise included the Pacific ports of North and South America and Honolulu. At this last place, he was welcomed by many old friends of the *Lackawanna* days. Years did not seem to have dimmed his spirit of adventure. He went over his old cruising grounds to observe with interest the immense progress which all that western coast had made in sixteen years. What had then been the wilds of California, to be penetrated with caution, with guides and on horseback, could now be comfortably traversed in parlor cars on railways, whose course lay through tracts which fairly laughed with their harvests, and where immense establishments for the production of California wine and the preservation of her fruits gave astonishing proof of the country's progress.

In South America he found the Andes scaled by a railway which took one to a height where the very conformation of the natives was changed by constantly breathing the rarefied air, their chests becoming of an enormous size. But all this progress had perhaps robbed the cruise of the charm of the new and difficult to attain. With his letters home came packages of photographs which formed an illustrated comment on the cruise.

I had thought at one time of printing in this volume all the pictures in my possession which were connected with my brother's career; but as this book is compiled solely with reference to preserving what I believe to be important to his daughter, and as such a course would delay greatly its being put in print, I have resolved to defer a plan which, however, might add much to its interest.

As this, then, is intended as a memorial of his character and deeds, I place as its final words those of George W. Cable who saw him with Admiral Bailey confront the mob at New Orleans, and declared that "It was one of the bravest deeds I ever saw done." And also Admiral Farragut's almost dying statement to his friend McRitchie, when he said :

"Perkins was young and handsome, and no braver man ever trod a ship's deck. His work in the *Chickasaw* did more to capture the *Tennessee* than all the guns of the fleet put together."







CAPTAIN GEORGE HAMILTON PERKINS.

U. S. Navy, 1884.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE  
OF  
CAPT. GEORGE HAMILTON PERKINS,  
U. S. N.

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BY CAPT. GEORGE E. BELKNAP, U. S. N.

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*Reprint from the Massachusetts Magazine.*





## SKETCH.

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In passing up the Concord and Claremont Railroad from Concord, the observant traveler has doubtless noticed the substantial and comfortable-looking homestead with large and trim front yard, shaded by thickly planted and generous topped maples, on the right-hand side of the road after crossing the bridge that spans

“Contoocook’s bright and brimming river,”

at the pleasant-looking village of Contoocookville in the northern part of Hopkinton.

There, under that inviting roof, the subject of this sketch, George Hamilton Perkins, the eldest son in a family of eight children, was born, October 20, 1836.

His father, the Hon. Hamilton Eliot Perkins, inherited all the land in that part of the town, and, in early life, in addition to professional work as a counsellor-at-law and member of the Merrimack County bar, built the mills at Contoocookville, and was, in fact, the founder of the thriving settlement at that point.

His paternal grandfather, Roger Eliot Perkins, came to Hopkinton from the vicinity of Salem, Mass., when a young man, and by his energy, enterprise, and public spirit, soon impressed his individuality upon the community, and became one of the leading citizens of the town.

His mother was Miss Clara Bartlett George, daughter of the late John George, Esq., of Concord, whose

ancestors were among the early settlers of Watertown, Mass. He is said to have been a man of active temperament, prompt in business, stout in heart, bluff of speech, honest in purpose, and never failing in any way those who had dealings with him.

As "the child is father of the man," so the boyhood and youth of Captain Perkins gave earnest of those qualities which in his young manhood the rude tests of the sea and the grim crises of war developed to the full. "No matter" was his first plainly-spoken phrase, a hint of childish obstinacy that foreshadowed the persistence of maturer years. Among other feats of his boyish daring, it is told that when a mere child, hardly into his first trousers, he went one day to catch a colt in one of his father's fields bordering on the Contoocook. The colt declined to be caught, and after a sharp scamper took to the river and swam across. Nothing daunted, the plucky little urchin threw off his jacket, plunged into the swift current, and safely breasting it was soon in hot pursuit on the other side; and after a long chase and hard tussle made out to catch the spirited animal and bring him home in triumph. Always passionately fond of animals and prematurely expert in all out-door sports, he thus early began to master that noblest of beasts, the horse.

When eight years old, his father removed with his family to Boston, and, investing his means in shipping, engaged for a time in trade with the west coast of Africa. The son was apt to run about the wharves with his father, and the sight of the ships and contact with "Jack" doubtless awoke the taste for the sea that was to be gratified later on.

Returning to the old homestead on the Contoocook, after the lapse of two years or more, the old, quiet, yet, for young boyhood, frolicsome outdoor life was

resumed, and the lad grew apace amid the rural scenes and ample belongings of that generous home ; not over-studious, perhaps, and chafing, as boys will, at the restraint imposed by the study of daily lessons and their recital to his mother.

At twelve years of age, he was sent to the Hopkinton Academy, and afterwards to the academy at Gilmanton. While at Gilmanton, Gen. Charles H. Peaslee, then member of congress from the Concord congressional district, offered him the appointment of acting midshipman to fill a vacancy at the Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, which, after some hesitation, his parents permitted him to accept, and he was withdrawn from Gilmanton and sent to Concord to prepare for entrance at Annapolis, under a private tutor. He remained under such pupilage until the age of fifteen, when the beginning of the academic year, October, 1851, saw him installed in " Middy's " uniform at that institution, and the business of life for him had begun in earnest.

To a young and restless lad, used to being afield at all times and hours with horse, dog, and gun, and fresh from a country home where the " pomp and circumstance " of military life had had no other illustration than occasional glimpses of the old " training and muster days " so dear to New Hampshire boys forty years ago, the change to the restraint and discipline ; the inflexible routine and stern command ; the bright uniforms and novel ways ; the sight of the ships and the use of a vocabulary that ever smacks of the sea ; the call by drum and trumpet to every act of the day, from bed-rising, prayers, and breakfast, through study, recitation, drill, and recreation hours, to tattoo and taps, when every student is expected to be in bed,—was a transformation wonderful indeed ; but the flow of discipline and routine is so regular and imperative that

their currents are imperceptibly impressed upon the youthful mind and soon become a part of his nature, as it were, unawares. So we may conclude that our young aspirant for naval honors proved no exception to the rule, and soon settled into these new grooves of life as quietly as his ardent temperament would permit.

The discipline at the Academy, in those days, was harsher and more exacting, and the officers of the institution of a sterner and more experienced sea-school, than now; and the three months' practice cruises across the Atlantic, which the different classes made on alternate summers, when the "young gentlemen" were trained to do all the work of seamen, both aloft and aloft, and lived on the old navy ration of salt junk, pork and beans, and hard-tack, with no extras, were anything but a joke. The Academy, too, was in a transition state from the system in vogue, up to 1850 inclusive, prior to which period the midshipmen went to sea immediately after appointment, pretty much after the fashion of Peter Simple and Jack Easy, and after a lapse of five years came to the school for a year's cramming and coaching before graduating as passed midshipmen. The last of such appointees was graduated in 1856, and the sometime hinted contaminating influence of the "oldsters" upon the "youngsters" was a thing to be known no more forever, albeit the hint of contamination always seemed, to the writer, questionable, as, in his experience, the habit and propensity of the youngsters for mischief appeared to require neither promotion nor encouragement. Indeed, their methods and ingenuity in evading rules and regulations and defying discipline were as original as they were persevering, and could the third-story room of the building occupied by the subject of this sketch be given

tongue, it would tell a tale of frolic and drollery that would only find parallel in the inimitable pages of Marryatt.

Convenient apparatus for the stewing or roasting of oysters, poaching of eggs, or the mixing of refreshing drinks, could be readily stowed away from the inspecting officer, or a roast goose or turkey be smuggled by a trusty ducky from some restaurant outside; and it was but the work of a moment after taps to tack a blanket over the window, light the gas, and bring out a dilapidated pack of cards for a game of California jack or draw-poker; or to convert the prim pine table into a billiard-table, with marbles for balls, with which the ownership of many a collar, neckerchief, shirt, and other articles of none too plentiful wardrobes, was decided in a twinkling, while the air of the crowded room grew thick and stifling from the smoke of the forbidden tobacco.

One of the company would keep a sharp lookout for the possible advent of the sometimes rubber-shod passed midshipman doing police duty, and, if necessary, danger signals would be made from the basement story, by tapping on the steam-pipes, which signal would be repeated from room to room, and from floor to floor, generally in ample time for the young bacchanalians to disperse in safety. If, perchance, the revellers got caught, they would stand up at the next evening's parade and hear the offense, and the demerits accorded, read out in presence of the battalion, with an easy *sang-froid* that piqued the sea-worn experience of the oldsters while they marveled. Let no one judge these lads too harshly, for the day came, all too soon, when they were to stand up and face the enemy, and, with equally nonchalant but sterner courage, go into battle in defense of the flag they were being trained to defend,

many winning undying honor and fame, some meeting untimely but heroic graves, in "the war that kept the Union whole."

Our midshipmite soon became a favorite with all, from the gruff old superintendent down to the littlest new-comer at the school. His bright, cheery, and genial disposition, and frank, hearty ways, were very winning; and if in his studies he did not take leading rank, nor become enraptured over analytics, calculus, and binomials, he was esteemed a spirited, heartsome lad of good stock and promise, bred to honorable purpose and aspiration, with seemingly marked aptitude for the noble profession, which, more than any other, calls for a heroism that never hesitates, a courage that never falters; for, aside from its special work of upholding and defending the flag, and all it symbolizes, on the high seas to the uttermost parts of the globe, "they that go down to the sea in ships" come closer to the manifestations of the unspeakable might and majesty of Almighty Power than any other. The seaman, with but a plank separating him from eternity, never knows at what moment he may be called upon to put forth all the skill and resource, the unflinching effort and sacrifice, that his calling ever, in emergency, unstintedly requires.

"Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail,  
He searches all its stormy deep, its dangers all unveil."

Of medium height, slight and trim of figure, clear complexion and piercing gray eyes of peculiar brilliancy, softened by a merry twinkle betokening latent mischief, young Perkins was a youth fair and interesting to look upon. He walked with quick, elastic step, carried his head a little on one side, and had a habit, when anything struck his fancy pleasantly, of shrugging his shoulders and rubbing his hands together in a vigorous

way, that seemed to declare in unmistakable terms that he was glad all over !

During one of the wonted summer cruises he made himself somewhat famous at great-gun practice, the details of which are given in one of his home letters, as follows :

“ We had target practice one day, and it came my turn to shoot. There was quite a swell on, which made it very difficult to get any kind of a shot, but when I fired I hit the target, which was a barrel with a small flag on it, set up about three quarters of a mile distant. Such a thing as hitting a small target at sea, with the ship in motion, and a swell on, is considered almost out of the question, so they all said it was ‘ luck.’ But another target was put out, and I fired again and stove it all to pieces. Then the crew all cheered, and made quite a hero of me. Still some said it must be luck, and another target was put out in exactly the same manner. This one I did not quite hit, but the shot fell so near that all gave it up it was *not* luck, and that I was a first-rate shot with broadside guns.”

After such demonstration, it is not strange that he was looked upon as having a very correct eye for distances, and was ever afterward called upon to fire whenever experiments were wanted. Naval gunnery, be it remarked in passing, is quite a different matter from army practice. In the former, with its platform never at rest, it is like shooting a bird on the wing, when distance and motion must be accurately gauged and allowed for ; in the latter, from its gun on a fixed platform, it is but a question of measurement from the object, by means of instruments if need be, and of good pointing. The seaman stands immediately in rear of the gun, with the eye along the sight directing its train, now right, now left, now well, and with taut lock-

string in hand in readiness to pull the moment the object is on, and on the alert to jump clear of the recoil. The soldier handles his piece with greater deliberation, sights it leisurely on its immovable platform, and, if mounted *en barbette*, retires behind a traverse before firing.

Graduating in June, 1856, the now full-fledged Midshipman Perkins could look back upon the five years' probationary experience with many pleasant recollections, though doubtless thanking his stars that his pupilage was over.

During his time there had been two superintendents at the Academy. The first was Capt. C. K. Stribling, a fine seaman of the old school, of rigid Presbyterian stock, stern, grim, and precise, with curt manners, sharp and incisive voice that seemed to know no softening, and whose methods of duty and conception of discipline smacked of the "true-blue" ideal of the Covenanters of old in their enforcement of obedience and conservation of morals. The second was Capt. L. M. Goldsborough, a man of stalwart height and proportions and a presence that ennobled command; learned and accomplished, yet gruff and overwhelming in speech and brusque and impatient in manner, but possessing, withal, a kindly nature, and a keen sense of humor that took in a joke enjoyably, however practical; and a sympathetic discrimination that often led him to condone moral offenses at which some of the straight-laced professors stood aghast. His responses at church service resounded like the growl of a bear; and when reprimanding the assembled midshipmen, drawn up in battalion, for some grave breach of discipline, he would stride up and down the line with the tread of an elephant, and expound the Articles of War in stentorian tones that equaled the roar of a bull! But if, perchance, in the awesome precincts of his office, he afterwards got hold



of a piece of doggerel some witty midshipman had written descriptive of such a scene, none would enjoy it more than he!

After an enjoyment of a three months' leave of absence at home, Midshipman Perkins was ordered to join the sloop-of-war *Cyane*, Captain Robb. That ship was one of the home squadron; and in November, 1856, sailed for Aspinwall, to give protection to our citizens, mails, and freight, in the transit across the Isthmus of Panama to California, back and forth. At that period, safe and rapid transit in that region of riots and revolution was much more important than now,—the Pacific Railroad existing only in the brains of a few sagacious men,—and the maintenance of the thoroughfare across the pestilential isthmus was a national necessity. For years our naval force on either side had had frequent occasion to land expeditions to protect the life and property of our citizens, and a frightful massacre of passengers had but lately occurred at the hands of a mongrel mob at Panama. The situation was critical, and for a time it looked as though the United States would be obliged to seize and hold that part of Colombian territory. But time wore on without outbreak on the part of the fiery freemen of that so-called republic, the continued presence of ships, both at Panama and Aspinwall, doubtless convincing them of the folly of further attempts to molest the hated Yankees.

Meanwhile the notorious Walker had been making a filibustering raid in Central America, which ended in failure, and the *Cyane* went over to Greytown to bring the sick and wounded of his deluded followers to Aspinwall for passage to New York. Some hundred and twenty officers and men found in the hands of the Costa Ricans were taken on board, most of them in a deplorable condition. Some died before weighing anchor for

Aspinwall, and as midshipmen have no definable duties except to obey orders, whatever they may be, Midshipman Perkins was sent in a boat one day to take a chaplain's part in the burial of one of the victims. "When we got out to sea," he wrote, "I read some prayers over him, and then he was thrown over the side, the sailors saying 'God bless you!' as the body sunk." This sad duty made him feel solemn and reflective, but more than likely as not he was called upon immediately on arrival on board, as "master's mate of the spirit-room," to attend the serving out of grog to the ship's company! Extremes meet on board a man-of-war, and the times for moralizing are short and scant.

So time sped, Midshipman Perkins performing his multifarious duties with alacrity and approval, and having some perilous adventures by flood and field in pursuit of wild game, until July, 1857, when the monotony of the cruise was broken by a trip to the banks of Newfoundland for the protection of our fishing interests, and including visits at Boston, St. John's, and Halifax.

The people of the Provinces were very hospitable, and the contrast between the dusky damsels of the isthmus and the ruddy-cheeked belles of St. John's and Halifax was brightening in the extreme, and young Perkins, ever gallant in his intercourse with the sex and a good dancer, found much favor with the Provincial beauties, and doubtless made up for past deprivations in the alluring contact with their charms.

Returning southward in the fall, the ship cruised among the West Indies, visiting, among other ports, Cape Haytien, the old capital of the island of Hayti, to inquire into the imprisonment of an American merchant captain. This place before the French Revolution had been a city of great magnificence and beauty—the Paris of the Isles,—and the old French nobility,

possessing enormous landed estates and large numbers of slaves, lived in a state of almost fabled grandeur and luxury; but negro rule, the removal of the seat of government to Port-au-Prince, and the great earthquake of 1842, have destroyed all but a semblance of its former glory and importance.

Among other sights visited by the officers was the old home of Count Cristoll, a castle of great size and strength, built on one of the highest hills, some twelve miles back of the town. It was told of the old Count that he used every year to bury large sums of money from his revenues, and then shoot the slave who did the work, that the secret of the spot might be known only to himself.

In January, 1858, Midshipman Perkins was detached from the *Cyane*, and he bade adieu forever to her dark, cramped-up, tallow-candle-lighted steerage, baggy hammock, and hard fare, where the occasional dessert to a salt dinner had been dried apples, mixed with bread and flavored with whiskey! There were no eleven-o'clock breakfasts for midshipmen in those days, and canned meats, condensed milk, preserved fruits, and other luxuries now common on shipboard, were almost unknown.

A few brief days at home, and orders came to join the storeship *Release*, which vessel, after a three months' cruise in the Mediterranean, returned to New York to fill up with stores and provisions for the Paraguay expedition. That expedition had for its object the chastisement of the dictator Lopez, for certain dastardly acts committed against our flag on the River Parana.

Owing to the paucity of officers, so many being absent on other foreign service, Midshipman Perkins was appointed acting sailing master, a very responsible position for so young an officer, which, with the added

comforts of a stateroom and well-ordered table in the ward-room, was almost royal in its contrast with the duty, the darksome steerage, and hard fare on board the *Cyane*. It would be difficult to make a landsman take in the scope of the change implied, but let him in imagination start across the continent in an old-fashioned, cramped-up stage-coach, full of passengers, with such coarse fare as could be picked up from day to day, and return in a Pullman car with well-stocked larder and restaurant attached, and he will get a glimmering as to the difference between steerage and ward-room life on board a man-of-war.

The *Release* was somewhat of a tub, and what with light and contrary winds and calms took sixty-two days to reach the rendezvous, Montevideo, arriving there in January, 1858. She found the whole fleet at anchor there, and officers and men soon forgot the weariness of the long passage in the receipt of letters from home, and in the joyous meetings with old friends. All admired the fine climate, and as that part of South America is the greatest country in the world for horses, the young sailing master rejoiced in the opportunity offered to indulge in his favorite pastime of riding. He also showed his prowess as a devotee of the chase in fine sport afforded on the pampas that enabled him to run down and shoot a South American tiger.

Meanwhile Commodore Shubrick, in command of the expedition, had completed his preparations for ascending the Parana, and the fleet soon moved up to a convenient point, the Commodore himself continuing on up the river in a small vessel to Corrientes to meet Lopez and convey to him the ultimatum of the United States. After some "backing and filling," as an old salt would characterize diplomacy, Lopez concluded "discretion to be the better part of valor," and making

a satisfactory *amende*, the Paraguayan war came to a bloodless end, and the hopes of expectant heroes, with visions of promotion, dissolved like summer clouds.

Young Perkins was now, August, 1858, transferred to the frigate *Sabine* for passage home to his examination for the grade of passed midshipman. Passing that ordeal satisfactorily, aided by handsome commendatory letters from his commanding officers, he spent three happy months at home, and then received orders for duty on board the steamer *Sumter*, as acting master, the destination of that vessel being the west coast of Africa, where, in accordance with the provisions of Article 8 of the Webster-Ashburton treaty (1842), the United States maintained a squadron, carrying not less than eighty guns, in coöperation with the British government, for the suppression of the slave trade. That article continued in active observance nineteen years, when the United States, having a little question of slavery to settle at home, gave the stipulated preliminary notice and recalled the ships.

The *Sumter* arrived on the coast in October, 1859, making her first anchorage in the lovely harbor on the west side of Prince's Island. That island, in about  $1^{\circ} 30'$  north latitude, covered with all the luxuriance of tropical growth and verdure, and broken into every conceivable shape of pinnacle, castellated rock and chasm, and frowning precipice, streaked with silvery threads of leaping streams in their dash to the sea, is indeed one of the most enchanting spots the eye ever rested on. The chief inhabitant of the lovely isle was Madame Ferrara, a woman of French extraction, who lived alone in a big, rambling house, surrounded by slaves, who cultivated her plantations and prepared the cocoa, palm oil, yams, and cocoanuts for the trade that sought her doors.

Filling up with water, the *Sumter* proceeded to the island of Fernando Po, a Spanish possession close in to the mainland, in the Bight of Biafra, where she met several English and French men-of-war, and received orders for her future movements.

The first thing to do, in accordance with the custom of the squadron, was the enlisting of fifteen or twenty negroes, known as Kroomen, whose home is in the Kroo country in upper Guinea, just south of Liberia. They did all the heavy boat work of the ship, thus lightening the work of the crew, and saving them as much as possible from exposure to the effects of the deadly climate. Great, strapping, muscular fellows, many of them with forms that an Apollo might envy, they were trained from infancy to be as much at home in the water as upon the land, and could swim a dozen leagues at sea or pull at the oar all day long without seeming fatigue. Wonderfully expert in their handling of boats, especially in the heavy surf that rolls in upon the coast with ceaseless volume and resistless power, its perilous line almost unbroken by a good harbor, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Gibraltar, their services in communicating with the shore were simply invaluable. The head Kroomen exercised despotic power over their respective gangs, and the men were given fanciful names, and so entered on the purser's books. Bottle-o-Bear, Jack Frying-Pan, Tom Bobstay, Upside Down, and the like, were favorite names; and our fun-loving young sailing master hints, in his letters of the time, that the archives of the fourth auditor's office at Washington may possibly embalm the names of certain Annapolis belles that had been borne by some of these sable folk!

The cruising ground embraced the coasts of Upper and Lower Guinea, and the coast of Biafra, with occa-

sional visits of recruit and recreation to Cape Town and St. Helena. The work was arduous, monotonous, and exhausting, especially during the rainy season, when the decks were continually deluged with water, and dry clothing was the exception, not the rule. The weather was always hot, often damp and sultry, and the atmosphere on shore so pestilential that no one was permitted to remain there after sundown. But that rule was no deprivation, as the dangers of the passage through the relentless breakers, alive with sharks, were so great that few cared to visit the shore except when absolutely necessary. The vessels cruised mostly in sight of the coast to watch the movements of the merchantmen, all more or less under suspicion as slavers, watching their chances to get off with a cargo. On the one hand was the rounded horizon dipping into the broad Atlantic; on the other, the angry line of rollers with their thunderous roar, backed by white beach and dense forest, with occasional glimpses of blue hills in the distant interior. This and nothing more, from day to day, save when a small village of thatched huts came into view, adding a scant feature to the landscape; or a solitary canoe outside the line of breakers; or strange sail to seaward; or school of porpoises, leaping and blowing, windward bound; or hungry shark prowling round the ship,—lent momentary interest to the watery solitude.

It was a privilege to fall in with another cruiser, whether of our own or of the English flag. On such occasions, down would go the boats for the exchange of visits, the comparison of notes, and sometimes the discussion of a dinner. The English officers had numerous captures and handsome sums of prize money to tell of, while our people, as a rule, could only talk of hopes and possibilities. Our laws regulating captures were as inflexible as the Westminster Catechism, and a captain

could not detain a vessel without great risk of civil damages, unless slaves were actually on board. Suspected ships might have all the fittings and infamous equipage for the slave traffic on board, but if their masters produced correct papers the vessels could not be touched; and our officers not infrequently had the mortification of learning that ships they had overhauled and believed to be slavers, but could not seize under their instructions, got off the coast eventually with large cargoes of ebon humanity on board.

Not so with the English commanders, whose instructions enabled them to take and send to their prize courts all vessels, except those under the American flag, under the slightest showing of nefarious character; and their hauls of prize money were rich and frequent.

The intercourse with the English officers, notes Master Perkins, at first cordial and agreeable, became, after a few months, cold and indifferent. Her majesty's officers no longer cared to show politeness or friendly feeling. The first premonitions of the rebellion in the John Brown raid, the break-up of the Democracy at Charleston, and the violence of the Southern press concerning the probable results of the pending presidential election, convincing them that the long-predicted and wished-for day—the breaking up of the Republic—was nigh at hand, and their real feelings as Englishmen cropped out but too plainly; but of this, more anon.

Despite the perils of the surf, the dangers of the inhospitable climate, and the unfriendly character of some of the savage tribes to be met with, the adventurous spirit and dauntless courage of Master Perkins was not to be balked. Volunteering for every duty, no matter how dangerous, hardly a boat ever left the ship that he was not in. The life of the mess through his unfailing good humor and exuberant flow of spirits, he was



the soul of every expedition, whether of service or pleasure; and before the cruise of some twenty-two months was up, he came to know almost every prominent tribe, chief, and king on the coast. Now dining with a king off the strangest viands; now holding "palaver" with another; now spending a day with the chief and his numerous wives; now visiting a French barracoon, where, under a fiction of law, the victims were collected to be shipped as unwilling apprentices, not slaves, to be returned to their native wilds, *if they lived long enough*; now ascending a river dangerous for boats, where, if the boat had capsized, himself and crew would but have served a morning's meal to the hungry sharks held as fetich by the natives along the stream, who yearly sacrifice young girls reared for the purpose to their propitiation; now scouring the bush in pursuit of the gorilla or shooting hippopotami by the half dozen, and other adventures and exploits wherein duty, excitement, and gratified curiosity were intermingled with danger and hair-breadth escape that few would care to tempt.

On one occasion, he volunteered to go with a boat's crew and find the mouth of the Settee river, not dreaming of landing through the unusually heavy surf. "But," said he, "in pulling along about half a mile from shore, a roller struck the boat and capsized it. Of course we were obliged to swim for shore; in fact, we had little to do with it, for the moment the boat was upset we were driven into the surf, and not one of us thought we should ever reach the shore; for if we were not lost in the surf, the sharks would eat us up.

"As I rose on the top of a wave I could look ahead and see the stretch of wild, tossing surf, which it seemed impossible for any one to live in; but when I looked back I could count all my men striking out, which was

very encouraging, as I feared one or two might be under the boat. I thought for a moment of you all at home, and wondered if mother would not feel a little frightened if she knew how strong the chances were against her son's receiving any more letters from home. Just then a roller struck me and carried me down so deep I was caught by the undertow and carried toward the sea instead of the land. When I came to the surface I tried to look out for the next roller, but it was no use; the first one half drowned me, and the next kept me down so long that when I rose I was in the wildest of surf, which tumbled and rolled me about in a way I did not like at all. My eyes, nose, and mouth were full of sand, and, in fact, I thought my time had come. Just then I looked on shore, and saw two of my men dragging some one from the water, and at that sight I struck out with one despairing kick, and managed to get near enough for two of the men to reach me; but that was all I knew of the affair until a little after sunset, when I became conscious of the fact that I was being well shaken, and I heard one of the men say, 'Cheer up, Mr. Perkins! Your boat and all the men are on shore.'

"This was such good news that I did not much mind the uncomfortable position in which I found myself. I was covered with sand and stretched across a log about two feet high, my head on one side and my feet on the other. The men had worked a long while to bring me to. Three of the men were half drowned and one injured. We managed to get the boat in the river, but suffered awfully from thirst. The next morning we lost our way, and, after pulling around till mid-afternoon, we stumbled on some natives fishing. We followed them home, but found them such a miserable, bad-looking lot of negroes that we expected trouble. Knowing that the native villages in the daytime are left in charge

of the old men and women, and not knowing what might happen when the men came back, we killed some chickens, and, with some sweet potatoes, made quite a meal. The strongest of us, myself and three others, got ready for a fight, while the rest manned the boat ready for our retreat.

“Shortly after this the chief came back, and about a hundred men with him. I told the chief I had come to pay him a visit, and we had a great palaver; but he would not give us anything to eat, and we made up our minds that it was a dangerous neighborhood; so we moved down on a sand-spit in sight of the ship, and there we stayed three days and nights. We built a tent and fortification, traded off most of our clothes for something to eat, and slept unpleasantly near several hundred yelling savages. All this while the ship could render no assistance; but on the third day the Kroomen came on shore with some oars, and, after trying all one day, we managed, just at night, to get through the surf and back to the ship. It was a happy time for us, and I may say for all on board, as they had been very anxious about us. Not far north of this, if you happen to get cast ashore, they kill and eat you at once, for cannibalism is by no means extinct among the negroes.”

The sequel of this perilous experience was that all of them were stricken down with the dread African fever, which, if it does not at all times kill, but too often shatters the constitution beyond remedy; and the fact that five officers, including one commanding officer, and a proportionate number of men, had been invalided home, and another commanding officer had died, all due to climatic causes, attests the general unhealthfulness of the coast. Other interesting incidents and narrow escapes, in which Master Perkins had part, might be told, did not lack of space forbid; but enough has been

shown to impress the fact that African cruising, even in a well-found man-of-war, is not altogether the work and pleasure of a holiday ; yet, in looking over young Perkins's letters, we cannot forbear this description of the expertness of the Kroomen in landing through the surf :

“ When the boat shoves off from the ship, the Kroomen, entirely naked with the exception of breech-clout, strike up a song, and pulling grandly to its rhythmic time, soon reach the edge of the surf, and lie on their oars. All eyes are now cast seaward, looking for a big roller, on the top of which we shall be carried on shore, and there is a general feeling of excitement. In a short time, the looked-for roller comes ; the Kroomen spring to their oars with a shout, the natives on shore yell with all their might, the boat shoots forward on top of the wave at incredible speed, the surf thunders like the roar of a battery, and altogether it seems as if the world had come to an end, and all those fellows in the infernal regions were let loose.

“ Now we must trust to luck wholly ; there is no retreat and no help, for the boat is beyond the power of any human management, and go on shore you must, either in the boat or under it. The moment the boat strikes the beach, the Kroomen jump overboard, and you spring on the back of one of them, and he runs with you up on the beach out of the way of the next roller, which immediately follows, breaking over the boat, often upsetting it, and always wetting everything inside. If you have escaped without a good soaking you may consider yourself a lucky fellow.”

In the midst of this work came the startling news of the portentous events at home. The infrequent mails began to bring the angry mutterings, the fateful tidings, that preluded the Rebellion. Every fresh arrival but added to the excitement and increased the bewilderment

that had so unexpectedly come upon the squadron ; for, far removed from the scene, and not daily witnesses of the overt acts of the maddened South, they mostly believed that the threatened conflict would be tided over, and the government be enabled to continue on in its wonted peaceful course. Now a wall, as of fire, rose up between the officers ; every mess in every ship was divided against itself ; brothers-in-arms of yesterday were enemies of to-day ; and no one spoke of the outlook at home except in bated breath and measured speech, from fear that the bitter cup would overflow then and there, and water turn to blood. Many Southern officers sent in their resignations at once, and all, both from North and South, were anxious to get home to do their part on one side or the other.

“For some time past,” wrote Master Perkins, “the foreigners here have shown us but little respect, and seem to regard us as a broken power ; and this has been very provoking, for in my opinion it will be a long time before any power can afford to despise the United States.” And he notes the fact that no more money could be had,—that the credit of the government was gone ! Ah ! how happy the day to loyal but wearied hearts on that inhospitable shore, when the news came of the President’s call for seventy-five thousand men, giving assurance that we still had a government, and meant to preserve it through the valor, the blood, the treasure of the nation, if need be !

After unaccountable and vexatious delay, the *Sumter* received orders, July, 1861, to proceed to New York ; meanwhile she had captured the slave brig *Falmouth*, a welcome finale to the cruise, and what with the officers transferred to her and the resignations that had taken place, Mr. Perkins now became executive officer, a fine position at that day for one of his years.

Making the homeward run in thirty-six days, the officers and men dispersed to their homes for a brief respite before entering upon the stern duties that awaited them, and Mr. Perkins had the satisfaction of receiving his commission as master.

Recruiting his shattered health for a short time at his welcoming home, he was ordered as executive officer of the *Cayuga*, one of the so-called ninety-day gunboats, carrying a battery of one eleven-inch Dahlgren gun, a twenty-pounder Parrot rifle, and two twenty-four pounder howitzers, and commanded by Lieutenant-Commanding N. B. Harrison, a loyal Virginian, who had wavered never a moment as to his duty when his state threw down the gauntlet of rebellion.

The exigencies of the war had soon exhausted the lists of regular officers and the few thousand seamen that had been trained in the service, and large drafts of officers and men were made upon the merchant marine as well as big hauls of green landsmen who had never dreamt of salt water; and First Lieutenant Perkins, as the only regular officer on board except the captain, soon found himself an exceeding busy man in organizing, disciplining, drilling, and shaping into place and routine, some ninety officers and men, all equally new to man-of-war-life and methods, and requiring the necessary time and instruction to fit them for their new duties. A fair soldier may be made in three months—a good seaman not in three years.

The vessel was ordered to join Farragut's fleet in the Gulf, but, with the usual delays incident to new ships, did not get off from New York until the first week in March, arriving at Ship Island March 31, by way of Key West, and having made a prize on the way. As the young executive had been promoted to a lieutenantancy on the eve of departure from New York his visions of prize money

were doubtless proportionately enhanced by the capture !

The next day she sailed for the mouth of the Mississippi, where, and at the head of the passes, the rest of the fleet was assembled, and Flag Officer Farragut busily engaged in completing the preparations for the attack on New Orleans.

The fleet consisted of four heavy sloops-of-war of the *Hartford* class ; three corvettes of the *Iroquois* class ; nine gunboats of the *Cayuga* class, and the large side-wheel steamer *Mississippi*, carrying in the aggregate one hundred and fifty-four guns, principally of nine-inch and eleven-inch calibre ; but as the large ships carried their batteries mostly in broadside, the actual number that could be brought to bear, under the most favorable conditions, on every given point, would be cut down to the neighborhood of ninety guns.

Supporting this force as auxiliary to it, for the bombardment of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, was Porter's mortar fleet of twenty schooners, each mounting a thirteen-inch mortar, and a flotilla of five side-wheel steamers, and the gunboat *Owasco*, carrying, in all, thirty guns.

The forts in question, forming the principal defenses of New Orleans, were heavy casemated works, with traverses on top for barbette guns, some ninety miles below the city at a point where the river makes a sharp bend to the southeast. Fort St. Philip, on the left bank, mounted forty-two guns, and Fort Jackson, including its water battery, had sixty-seven guns in position, all of calibre from the long twenty-four pounder to the heavy ten-inch Columbiad, and including several six-inch and seven-inch rifles.

Stretching across the river from bank to bank to bar the channel, nearly opposite Fort Jackson and exposed

to the perpendicular fire of St. Philip, were heavy ship's chains, supported and buoyed by hulks, rafts, and logs, and half a dozen large schooners. The rebels had also established some works on the banks of the river about four miles from town, known as the McGehee and Chalmette batteries, the latter being located at the point ever memorable in American history as the scene of General Jackson's overwhelming defeat of the British in 1815.

Their reliance afloat was in the *Louisiana*, an iron-clad, carrying nine rifles and seven smooth bores of heavy calibre; the ram *Manassas*, one gun; the *McRae*, seven guns; the *Moore*, and *Quitman*, with two guns each; six river steamers, with their stems shod with iron to act as rams, and several iron-protected tugs.

Assembling the fleet at the head of the passes, after much difficulty in getting the heavy ships over the bar, Farragut ordered the ships to strip like athletes for battle. Down came mast and spar till nothing was left standing but lower masts,—and even those were taken out of some of the gunboats,—and soon everything best out of reach of shot was landed, leaving clear decks, and no top hamper to be cut away by the enemy's projectiles and come tumbling down about the heads of guns' crews.

About this time the English and French men-of-war that had lain before New Orleans, giving aid and comfort to the enemy and making merry in singing rebel songs on board, especially on board the English vessels, left the river, their officers declaring it an impossibility for the fleet to pass the forts and obstructions.

In this connection, it may be mentioned that the cruisers of John Bull prowled along the coast during the entire war, with sometimes permission to enter the blockaded ports, conveying information and lending



encouragement to the enemy, and rejoicing at every disaster that befell the Union arms, which, together with the tacit connivance of the British government in letting out the *Alabama*, and other hostile acts, ought to be treasured against Great Britain so long as the Republic endures.

On the sixteenth of April, Farragut moved up to a point just below the forts, and on the eighteenth, having established the vessels of the mortar fleet at distances ranging from twenty-nine hundred and fifty yards to four thousand yards, from Jackson, and partially hidden by trees on one side the river, and disguised with bushes on the other, opened the bombardment, which was kept up with little interruption for six days and nights; the corvettes and gunboats taking part by turns in running up, delivering their fire, and dropping down with the current out of range again. The forts replied vigorously, and every night the enemy sent down fire-rafts, but to little purpose.

Meanwhile, under cover of the night and the fire of the fleet, Fleet Captain Bell, and Lieutenants-Commanding Crosby and Caldwell of the gunboats *Pinola* and *Itasca*, had succeeded in forcing a channel through the obstructions, a piece of duty that had required the most robust and dauntless courage, and in which Caldwell—a son of Massachusetts—shone preëminent by the coolness of his methods and thoroughness of his work. And now, on the night of the twenty-third, after a last examination by Caldwell in a twelve-oared boat, all was pronounced clear, and the fleet was to weigh at two o'clock in the morning.

The fleet was formed in three divisions, the first comprising the *Hartford*, flagship, the *Brooklyn*, and *Richmond*; the second composed of eight vessels with the divisional flag of Captain Bailey on board the

*Cayuga*; and the third of six vessels, with Fleet Captain Bell's flag flying from the *Sciota*; but was ordered to pass through the obstructions in one column or single line ahead, the *Cayuga* leading. Farra'gut had intended to lead himself, but at Bailey's urgent request yielded that honor to him.

The letters of Lieutenant Perkins, ever glowing with ardor for the good cause, were, at this time, full of patriotic fervor and aspiration, and when he said, "I hope the *Cayuga* will go down before she ever gives up, and 'I guess' she will," he certainly meant it! And the supreme moment had now come for him to inform this hope by valorous deeds, and all unfalteringly did he walk in the blazing light of heroism that none but the brave may dare to tread.

The signal to weigh was promptly made at two o'clock a. m., but work at night is always behind, and it was half-past three o'clock before the little *Cayuga*, leading the line, pressed gallantly through the obstructions at full speed, eager for the fray, closely followed by the heavy *Pensacola*, and ship after ship in the order assigned; but lack of space forbids a general description of the battle, and we propose to do hardly more than to follow the fortunes of the *Cayuga*.

Lieutenant-Commanding Harrison had paid his executive the high compliment of allowing him to pilot the vessel, and Perkins took position in the eyes of her, on the top-gallant forecastle, while Lieutenant-Commanding Harrison and Captain Bailey stood aft, near the wheel, and all the men, except the helmsmen, were made to lie flat on the deck until the time came for them to serve the battery. Prone on the deck at Perkins's feet, and with his head close down over the bow, was the captain of the forecastle, to watch the channel and give timely warning of anything barring the way that

might escape the wider-ranging eye of the intrepid young pilot; and as the *Cayuga* pressed on, receiving the first shock of the outburst from the forts, what finer subject for the painter than that lithe young figure standing up in bold and unflinching relief, at the extreme bow of the ship, peering ahead in the morning starlight to pilot her safely on her way, amid the blinding flame and screaming bolts, the hurtle of shot and crash of shell, the explosion and deafening roar of a hundred shotted guns, as the vessel steamed into the jaws of death, leading the fleet into one of the most momentous and memorable conflicts in naval annals. Nor should cool and phlegmatic Harrison nor grand old Bailey be overlooked, as the constant flashes of the thick exploding shells revealed them standing calm and grim at their posts, in readiness to direct the movements of vessel and column, and engage the foe, ashore and afloat; nor the impatient officers and crew, who eagerly waited the order to spring to their guns and make reply to the withering fire pouring in upon them as yet unavenged.

“Noticing,” said Perkins, “that the enemy’s guns were all aimed for mid-stream, I steered right close under the walls of St. Philip, and although our masts and rigging were badly shot through, the hull was hardly damaged. After passing the last battery, I looked back for some of our vessels, and my heart jumped into my mouth when I found I could not see a single one. I thought they must all have been sunk by the forts. Looking ahead, I saw eleven of the enemy’s gunboats coming down upon us, and I supposed we were *gone*. Three made a dash to board us, but a charge from our eleven-inch settled one, the *Governor Moore*. The ram *Manassas* just missed us astern, and we soon disposed of the other. Just then some of our gunboats came to the assistance of the *Cayuga*, and all

sorts of things happened; it was the wildest excitement all round. The *Varuna* fired a broadside into us instead of the enemy. Another attacked one of our prizes; three had struck to us before any of our ships came up, but when they did come up we all pitched in and sunk eleven vessels in about twenty minutes."

The brief encounter with the *Moore* had been very exciting. The vessels were alongside each other, and both were reloading,—the guns muzzle to muzzle, and but a few feet apart. The gun that could fire first would decide the fate of one or the other. Perkins sprang down, and, taking personal charge of the smoking eleven-inch, put fresh vigor into its loading, and, firing the instant the rammer was withdrawn, swept the *Moore's* gun from its carriage, and killed or disabled thirteen of its crew.

The *Cayuga* still leading the way up the river came upon a regiment at daylight encamped close to the bank, and Perkins, as the mouthpiece of the captain, hailed them and ordered them to come on board and deliver up their arms or he would "blow them to pieces."

It proved to be the Chalmette regiment, and, surrendering, the officers and men were paroled and the former allowed to retain their side-arms, "except," said Perkins, "one captain, whom I discovered was from New Hampshire. I took his sword away from him and have kept it."

Now Farragut came up in the *Hartford* and signaled the fleet to anchor. This was near Quarantine, some five miles above the forts. All the vessels had succeeded in running the gauntlet of their fire except three gunboats, and New Orleans was now practically at the mercy of the fleet; but the *Varuna* had been rammed and sunk in the hot fight with the enemy's flotilla just above St. Philip.

The *Cayuga* had received forty-two hits in mast and

hull, and six men had been wounded. The hurricane of projectiles had passed mostly too high to do mortal harm to her crew, due in part to the skilful manner in which Perkins had sheered in toward the bank from mid-stream so early in the fight.

Resting until the next morning to care for the dead and wounded, and the repair of damages, the fleet again weighed, the *Cayuga* still in advance; and when the spires of the city hove in sight from her deck, "three rousing cheers and a tiger" went up from her gallant crew. But the plucky little gunboat was getting ahead too fast, for arriving close abreast the Chalmette battery, which seemed to be deserted, she suddenly received a fire that compelled a halt. Over-matched five to one, and having been struck fourteen times, with shot and shells dropping thick and fast about her, she slowed and dropped back a little with the current, until the *Hartford* and *Brooklyn* coming up quickly silenced the enemy with their heavy broadsides, while the *Pensacola* cared for the hostile works on the opposite bank in like manner. The fleet then kept on without further obstruction, and arrived and anchored off the city about noon; finding the levee along its entire length aflame with burning cotton, coal, ships, steamboats, and other property the infuriated enemy had devoted to destruction. The loss to the fleet in this daring and brilliant feat had been thirty-seven killed and one hundred and thirty-seven wounded.

It is needless to say that Lieutenant Perkins not only received high commendation from Captain Bailey and Lieutenant-Commanding Harrison, but won the praise and admiration of all on board and in the fleet, by the coolness and intrepidity shown by him in every emergency of the fight and passage up the river.

The first tidings received in Washington foreshad-

owing the success of the attack was through rebel telegrams, announcing "one of the enemy's gunboats"—the *Cayuga*—"above the forts." Some question subsequently arose between Bailey and Farragut as to the *Cayuga's* position in the passage, which in the diagrams accompanying the official reports contradicted the text,—putting the *Cayuga* third instead of first in the van. Farragut cheerfully made the correction.

Soon after anchoring, Bailey was ordered to go on shore and demand the unconditional surrender of the city, and he asked Lieutenant Perkins to accompany him. This duty was almost as dangerous and conspicuous as the passage of the forts had been, for an infuriated and insolent mob followed them from the landing to the mayor's office and, while there with the mayor and General Lovell, besieged the doors, demanding the "Yankee officers" to be given up to them to be hung. The demonstration at last became so threatening that the mayor drew off the attention of the mob by a speech to them in front of the building, while the Union officers took a close carriage in its rear and, driving rapidly down to their boat, reached the ship in safety.

Bailey had managed to hoist the flag over the mint, which a party of rebels tore down the next day, but the authorities refused to surrender the city or to haul down the insignia of rebellion. Then ensued a correspondence which, to read at this day, makes the blood boil at rebel insolence and the wonder grow at Farragut's forbearance; but on the 29th of April, he sent Fleet Captain Bell on shore with two howitzers manned by sailors and a battalion of two hundred and fifty marines and took possession of the city. Meanwhile the forts had surrendered to Porter of the mortar fleet, and General Butler, arriving on the first of May, relieved Farragut of further responsibility as to the city.

The *Cayuga* had been so badly cut up by shot and shell that she was selected to take Captain Bailey north as bearer of despatches, and landing him at Fortress Monroe, proceeded on to New York to be refitted. This enabled Lieutenant Perkins to make a short visit to Concord, where his father, now become judge of probate of Merrimack county, had removed, and both himself and the family received many congratulations, personal and written, at the brilliant record he had made in the recent memorable operations on the Mississippi.

Modest and unassuming, with a genial frankness of manner that told pleasantly alike on quarter-deck or street, in family circle or drawing-room, he wore his honors in the quietest way possible, never speaking of his own part in the brave deeds of the time, except when pressed to do so, and then with a reticence all too provoking, from the well-grounded suspicion that he kept back the pith of the real story of personal participation he might tell without tinge of exaggeration or boastfulness.

Returning to the *Cayuga* he found a new commanding officer, Lieutenant-Commanding D. McN. Fairfax, another loyal Virginian, who not only stood faithful to the flag under all circumstances, but had, as the officer from the *San Jacinto*, boarded the *Trent* and taken from her the arch conspirators, Mason and Slidell, suffering the contumely of rebel womanhood in the reception accorded him by Mr. Commissioner Slidell's daughter.

Fairfax and Perkins had known each other on the coast of Africa, and it was the meeting of old friends made doubly pleasant by the senior's hearty appreciation of the laurels so gallantly won by the junior, and self-congratulation in the promised comfort of retaining an executive of so much energy, ability, and reputation.

Rejoining Farragut's squadron, Perkins saw other gallant and varied service in the *Cayuga* until November, 1862, when he was transferred to the *Pensacola*, and the following month commissioned lieutenant-commander, a new grade created by Congress to correspond with that of major in the army.

In June, 1863, General Banks, then besieging Port Hudson, sent word to the now Rear Admiral Farragut that he must have more powder or give up the siege, wherefore the Admiral ordered the gunboat *New London* on the important service of powder transportation and convoy, assigning Perkins to the command until the officer ordered from the North by the department should arrive. The enemy had possession at that time of some three hundred miles of the river below Port Hudson, with batteries established at various points and sharpshooters distributed along the banks.

Five times Perkins ran the fiery gauntlet successfully, but on the sixth his vessel was disabled in a sharp fight at Whitehall's Point. One shot from the enemy exploded the *New London's* boiler, and another disabled her steam chest. In that critical condition, directly under the guns of the hostile battery, and exposed to the fire of sharpshooters on the bank, and deserted by his consort, the *Winona*, his position seemed desperate almost beyond remedy; but fertile in expedients and daring to rashness in their execution, he finally succeeded, after almost incredible exertion and perilous personal adventure, in communicating with the fleet below, and the vessel was saved.

Now the commanding officer from the North having arrived, Perkins was transferred to the command of the ninety-day gunboat *Sciota*, the best command at that time in the squadron, for an officer of his years, and assigned to duty on the blockade off the coast of Texas.



To one of his social disposition and active temperament, the blockade, ever harassing and monotonous, was, as he wrote, a "living death," adding that "we are all talked out, and sometimes a week passes and I hardly speak more than a necessary word." Venturing ashore several times on hunting excursions, he at last came near being captured by the enemy, and held after that, that "cabin'd confinement was preferable to a rebel prison," and so kept on board. Once during that weary nine months, the tedium was broken by the capture of a fat prize—a schooner loaded with cotton. Let us hope that the prize court and its attendant officials did not absorb too big a share of the proceeds!

Relieved from that command late in May, 1864, with leave to proceed home, he arrived at New Orleans in June, to find active preparations for the Mobile fight going on, and though he had not been at home for two years, he could not stand it to let slip so glorious an opportunity for stirring service, and so volunteered to remain. Farragut, delighted at such determination, quite different from the experience he had had with some officers, assigned to Perkins a command above his rank—the *Chickasaw*—a double-turreted monitor, carrying four eleven-inch guns and a crew of one hundred and forty-five men and twenty-five officers. She had been built, together with the *Winnebago*, a sister vessel, at St. Louis, by Mr. Joseph B. Eads, the eminent engineer, on plans of his own. Of light draught and frame, and peculiar construction, some officers distrusted her strength and sea-going qualities. The *Chickasaw*, too, was not yet completed, the mechanics being still at work on her machinery and fittings, and her crew, with the exception of half a dozen men-of-war's-men, were river men and landmen, knowing nothing of salt-water sailing or of naval discipline. But time pressed; every

moment was of priceless value ; and Perkins, declining all social invitations, set about with characteristic energy to prepare his ship for the coming conflict. Nor did his work of preparation and drill cease, either in the river or outside, until well into the night preceding the eventful day in Mobile Bay that was to add another brilliant page to the annals of the navy.

On the 28th of July, he left New Orleans to join the fleet off Mobile, and on the way down the river an episode occurred that came nigh settling the fate of the *Chickasaw* without risk or chance of battle ; for on nearing the bar, Perkins left the pilot house a moment to look after some matters requiring attention outside. He hardly reached the spot he sought, when, turning round, he saw that the pilot had changed the ship's course and was heading directly for a wreck close aboard, which to strike would end the career of the *Chickasaw* then and there. Springing back into the pilot house, he seized the wheel and brought the ship back on her course, then snatching a pistol from his belt, said to the traitorous fellow : " You are here to take this ship over the bar, and if she touches ground or anything else, I'll blow your d—d brains out ! " Pale with suppressed rage, and trembling with fear, the pilot expostulated that " the bottom was lumpy, and the best pilot in the river could not help touching at times. " " No matter," rejoined Perkins, " if you love the Confederacy better than your life, take your choice ; but if you touch a single lump, I'll shoot you ! " Needless to say, no lumps were found, nor that the pilot made haste to get out of such company the moment he was permitted to do so ; neither may we doubt that the recording angel traced, with lightest hand, the strong language used by the nearly betrayed captain !

The *Chickasaw* arrived off Mobile bar August 1,

where all was expectancy and preparation for the coming fight, a fight which perhaps had more in it of dramatic interest than any other naval battle of the war. The wooden ships pushing into the bay through the torpedo-strewn channel and under the fierce storm of shot and shell from Fort Morgan, lashed together in pairs for mutual support in case of disaster; the sudden and tragic sinking of the *Tecumseh* by torpedo stroke, with the loss of the heroic Craven and most of his brave officers and men; the halt of the *Brooklyn* in mid-channel in face of that dire disaster, which, with the threatened huddling of the ships together by the inward sweep of the tide, portended swift discomfiture and possible defeat; the intuitive perception and quick decision that literally enabled Farragut to take the flood that led to fortune, in the instant ordering of the *Hartford* to push ahead with his flag and assume the lead he had relinquished only at the urgent request of the *Brooklyn's* commander; the restored order and prompt following of the fleet, regardless of torpedoes, on the new course blazed out by the eagle eye and emphatic tongue of the fearless old admiral as he grappled with the emergency from the futtock shrouds of the flagship; the little boat putting off from the *Metacomet*, suddenly lighted up by its saucy ensign, in the midst of the fiery chaos and thunderous roar of battle, to save the few souls struggling in the water from the ill-fated *Tecumseh*, calling forth admiration, alike from friend and foe, at the intrepidity of its mission; the dash of the enemy's powerful ram *Tennessee*, clad in heaviest armor, down the Union line, endeavoring to strike each vessel in turn; the separation of the coupled ships when beyond the reach of Morgan's guns, and the dash of the gunboats led by Jouett, of the *Metacomet*, like hounds released from the leash, at the enemy's flotilla; the reappearance of

leviathan *Tennessee* and the fierce tournament that ensued, with turtle-backed *Chickasaw* following close under her stern with bulldog grip that knew no release; the intrepid skill and desperate valor never surpassed, with which the ram manœuvred and withstood the hammering and ramming of the wooden ships, the pounding and shattering of the iron-clads, before she yielded to the inevitable fate that awaited her,—all conspired to form a scene of grand and dramatic circumstance almost without parallel in naval warfare.

The youngest officer in command on that day—the 5th of August—so fateful to the fading fortunes of the Confederacy, so glorious to the re-ascendant star of Union, no one contributed more to its glories and success than Perkins of the *Chickasaw*; and in any other service under the sun he would have received immediate promotion for what he did on that day. Had he been an Englishman, the honors of knighthood would have been conferred on him, as well as promotion, but as an American he still waits adequate recognition for deeds as brave as they were conspicuous and telling.

Said Mr. Eads, the builder, when he heard the results of the battle and the surpassing part of the *Chickasaw* in it: “I would walk fifty miles to shake hands with the young man who commanded her!” And remembering the disparagement that had been put on the vessel and her sister ship, the *Winnebago*, his enthusiasm knew no bounds, and he took pains to gather all the details of the *Chickasaw’s* brilliant work.

With the loss of the *Tecumseh*, the iron-clad portion of the fleet was reduced to the *Manhattan*, armed with two fifteen-inch guns, and the *Chickasaw* and *Winnebago* of two eleven-inch guns each; but one of the *Manhattan’s* guns became disabled early in the action, by a bit of iron lodging in the vent, and the *Winne-*

*bago's* turrets would not turn, so that her guns could be pointed only by manœuvring the vessel. But the *Chickasaw*, owing to Perkins's foresight and hard work, was in perfect condition, as illustrated in all her service on that eventful day, as well as on all subsequent occasions, until the capitulation of Mobile ended the drama of rebellion on the Southern seaboard.

The wooden ships, stripped as at New Orleans for the stern work in hand, numbered fourteen, and the number of guns carried by the fleet was one hundred and fifty-five, throwing, by added facility of pivot and turret, ninety-two hundred and eight pounds of metal in broadside, from which thirteen hundred and twenty must be deducted through the early loss of the *Tecumseh* and the disabled gun of the *Manhattan*.

The enemy's defenses consisted of Fort Morgan, commanding the channel at Mobile Point, mounting seventy guns; Fort Gaines on the eastern point of Dauphin Island, some three miles northwest of Fort Morgan, armed with thirty guns, and Fort Powell, about four miles from Gaines northwest, at Grant's Pass, with four guns.

Across the channel, which runs close to Morgan, several lines of torpedoes were planted, and just beyond them to the northward of the fort, in line abreast waiting their opportunity, was the rebel squadron, comprising the *Tennessee*, flagship of Admiral Buchanan, and the gunboats *Morgan*, *Gaines*, and *Selma*, carrying in the aggregate twenty-two guns,—eight rifles and fourteen smooth-bores. The *Tennessee*, the most powerful ship that ever flew the Confederate flag, was two hundred and nine feet in length, and forty-eight feet in width with a heavy iron spur projecting from the bow some two feet under water. Her sides "tumbled home" at an angle of forty-five degrees and were clad in armor

of five and six inches thickness, over a structure of oak and pine of twenty-five inches. Her guns, six heavy Brooke's rifles, were arranged, by port and pivot, for an effective all-round fire, and her speed was six knots.

All was ready for the attack on the evening of the 4th of August, and at half-past five the next morning the signal was thrown out to weigh and fall into the order prescribed; the wooden ships in couples, and the iron-clads in line by themselves; the *Tecumseh* in the van and the *Chickasaw* in rear, according to the rank of their commanding officers.

At half-past six the fleet was across the bar and in order of battle. No starlight or favoring clouds now to partially mask its movements as at the passage of Forts Jackson and St. Philip, but the joyous sunshine flooding land and sea with its brightness, and mirroring its revealing gleams upon fort and ship and pennon, serving friend and foe alike impartially. Alas! for the brave souls to whom that gracious morning light was the last of earth, but we may hope they awoke in a light of still more radiance and glory, and amid pæans of a joyous host, choiring "Well done, thou good and faithful servants, that didst give thy lives to God and country!"

The soft south wind of that fair morn came like a benediction to the fleet now sweeping on with the flood-tide, and stillness like a sentient presence, only disturbed by the sound of screw or paddle-wheel as they turned ahead, hung over the ships till broken by the belching roar of the *Tecumseh's* monster guns, as she threw two fifteen-inch shells into Morgan—her first and last! And now, at seven, "by the chime," the action became general, and the *Tecumseh*, having loaded with heaviest charge and solid steel shot, steamed on ahead of the *Brooklyn* to attack the *Tennessee*; but Craven, think-

ing he saw a movement on the part of the ram to get out of the way, together with the seemingly too narrow space between the fatal buoy and the shore for manœuvre in case of need, gave the order to starboard the helm, and head directly for the watchful *Tennessee*, waiting with lock-strings in hand to salute the monitor as she closed—gallant foemen worthy of her steel! So near and yet so far, for hardly had the *Tecumseh* gone a length to the westward of the sentinel buoy, than the fate, already outlined, overwhelmed her, and her iron walls became coffin, shroud, and winding-sheet to Craven and most of the brave souls with him, and all so suddenly that those who had seen the disaster could hardly realize what had taken place.

Ours is not the purpose to follow further the details of the fight, but to go with Perkins in the *Chickasaw* and see things as he saw them on that stirring day, as gathered from his letters and as fortified from other sources. Of tireless energy and restless activity, and sternly intent upon making the *Chickasaw* second to none in the grand work demanded of the fleet, he imparted nerve and enthusiasm throughout the vessel; now in the pilot-house, looking after the helmsman; then in the forward turret, personally sighting the guns; anon on top of the turret, taking in the surroundings.

His fine spirit and high moral courage had characteristic illustration when, the night before the fight, calling his officers into the cabin, he thus addressed them: "Gentlemen, by this time to-morrow the fate of this fleet and of Mobile will be sealed. We have all a duty to perform and a victory to win. I have sent for you to say that not a drop of wine, liquor, or beer is to be drunk on board of this vessel from this hour until the battle is over and the victory won, or death has come to us. It is my wish that every officer and man shall go

into battle with a clear head and strong nerves. I rely upon you to comply with this requirement, confident that the *Chickasaw* and her crew can thus best perform their whole duty."

An officer who held high position on board the flag-ship writes: "Perkins went into the fight in his shirt sleeves and a straw hat, and as he passed the *Hartford*, he was on top of the turret waving his hat and dancing around with delight and excitement." "The iron-clads," said Perkins, "were ordered to follow inside the fleet, between fleet and fort. I had orders to be reserve force and remain with wooden vessels after passing obstructions. Our course was between a certain buoy and the shore. This passage was known to be free from torpedoes, and was left for the blockade runners. All the vessels had orders to keep between that buoy and shore, but in other respects the iron-clads had separate orders from the wooden vessels. In the confusion resulting from the destruction of the *Tecumseh* and the movements of the *Brooklyn*, the monitors received *no* orders and followed in the line of the other vessels." Be it said in passing that Perkins had no pilot, and at sight of the *Tecumseh's* doom, one of the men in the pilot-house fainted, leaving only Perkins and one man to steer the vessel until the vigorous methods applied brought the man to and freshened his pluck! The pilot-house was abaft the forward turret, not on top, as in the case of the *Tecumseh* class, and was entered through a trap-door which was kept open during the fight, for the vessel being unfinished there was no way of opening it from inside when closed.

"I pushed forward as rapidly as possible, but my ship anyway was stationed last of the iron-clads, as I was youngest in command. We fired at the fort to keep down its fire till the wooden ships had passed.



When the *Tennessee* passed, it was on my port side; she then steamed toward Fort Morgan. Some of our vessels anchored, others kept under way, and when the *Tennessee* approached the fleet again she was at once attacked by the wooden vessels, but they made no impression upon her. An order was now brought to the iron-clads by Fleet Surgeon Palmer for them to attack the ram, but as they stood for her, she seemed again to move as if retiring toward the fort, but the *Chickasaw* overtook her, and after a short engagement succeeded in forcing her to surrender, having shot away her smoke-stack, destroyed her steering gear, and jammed her after ports so that her stern guns were rendered useless. As she could not steer she drifted down the bay head on, and I followed her close, firing as fast as I could, my guns and turrets, in spite of the strain upon them, continuing in perfect order. When Johnston came on the roof of the *Tennessee* and showed the white flag as signal of surrender, no vessel of the fleet was as near as a quarter of a mile, but the *Ossipee* was approaching, and her captain was much older than myself. I was wet with perspiration, begrimed with powder, and exhausted by long-continued exertion. I drew back and allowed Captain LeRoy to receive the surrender, though my first lieutenant, Hamilton, said to me at the time: 'Captain, you are making a mistake.'

Knowing full well that the *Chickasaw's* eleven-inch shot would not penetrate the stout side-armor of the *Tennessee*, Perkins made for the weakest part of the vessel—her stern—and hung there close aboard, pouring solid shot of iron and steel into that vital part with the accuracy of pistol-shooting, until the ram surrendered; then taking her in tow, carried her near the flagship. He had fired fifty-two shots, and says the

officer of the *Hartford* already quoted, "The guns of the *Chickasaw* jammed the steering gear of the ram, also the port stopper of the after port, disabling the after gun, and a shot from the *Chickasaw* broke Admiral Buchanan's leg."

But said Commander Nicholson of the *Manhattan*, in his official report: "Of the six fifteen-inch projectiles fired from this vessel at the rebel iron-clad *Tennessee*, I claim four as having struck, doing most of the real injuries that she has sustained;" then enumerating the injuries inflicted, which included most of those claimed for the *Chickasaw*. Upon which claim put forth by the *Manhattan*, the writer ventures the opinion: First, that four hits out of six shots were poor shooting for a monitor at a target like the *Tennessee*, and suggestive of considerable distance between the vessels; second, that eye-witnesses have affirmed that only one of the *Manhattan's* shot took effect, a solid shot that struck the ram on the port beam, crushing her armor and splintering the backing, but not entering the casemate, though leaving a clean hole through; third, that the effect of that one shot showed what the *Manhattan* might have accomplished had she taken as favorable a position as that chosen by the *Chickasaw*; fourth, that it is believed the report of a board of survey confirmed the opinion as to that one shot; fifth, that, as between the great difference of sound in the firing of the fifteen-inch gun and an eleven-inch, and the greater destructive effect of the larger projectiles which could not but be felt by those receiving it, the enemy would best be likely to know from what source they sustained the most vital damage; sixth, that the concurrent opinions of the day, as given by press correspondents, eye-witnesses to the conflict, magazine summaries, official reports, the praise of Perkins on every lip, the talk of

his promotion by distinguished officers, and the testimony of the enemy themselves, including Admiral Buchanan and Captain Johnston, all go to show that the surrender of the *Tennessee* was due more to the dogged and unrelenting effort and skilful management of Perkins of the *Chickasaw* than to any other cause.

Asked the *Tennessee's* pilot of *Metacomet* Jouett: "Who commanded the monitor that got under our stern?" adding, "D—n him! he stuck to us like a leech; we could not get away from him. It was he who cut away the steering gear, jammed the stern port shutters, and wounded Admiral Buchanan."

Said Captain Johnston, in the same vein: "If it had not been for that d—d black hulk hanging on our stern we would have got along well enough; she did us more damage than all the rest of the federal fleet."

"The praise of Commander Perkins," wrote a son of Concord, himself an active participant in the fight, "on the superb management of his command, and the most admirable and efficient working of his ship, was upon the lips of all."

Pages of similar commendation might be quoted, but what need to multiply testimony so direct and conclusive as to Perkins's gallantry and achievement, questioned only in quarters where the discretion of silence and suggestion of modesty had best been observed!

It only remains to add, in this connection, that so long as the *Tennessee* continued to flaunt her flag in face of the fleet, so long the work of that glorious day was of naught; that her capture, due in greatest part to the efforts of the *Chickasaw*, completed the work, and ensured, without embarrassment, the continued operations against Fort Morgan and other defenses in the bay.

Perkins, not content with laurels already won, got

under way after dinner, and steamed up to Fort Powell, taking that work in rear. The shots from the *Chickasaw* destroyed the water-tanks, and Captain Anderson reported that, believing it to be impossible to drive the iron-clad from its position, and fearing that a shell from the *Chickasaw* would explode the magazine, he decided to save his command and blow up the fort, which was done that night at 10:30. In the afternoon the *Chickasaw* had seized a barge loaded with stores, from under the guns of Fort Powell, and towed it to the fleet.

The next afternoon, the ever-ready and alert *Chickasaw*, under her indefatigable commander, went down to Fort Gaines and shelled that work until dusk with such telling effect that, coupled with the fact that the land force under General Granger, investing its rear, was now ready to open fire in conjunction with the fleet, the rebel commander capitulated the next morning.

Morgan was now the only remaining work of the outer line of Mobile's defenses to be "possessed and occupied," and General Granger, after throwing a sufficient garrison into Gaines, transferred his army and siege train to the other side of the bay, and landing at Navy Cove, some four miles from Morgan, began its investment.

While this was going on, the *Chickasaw* was not idle, but continually using her guns at one point and another, with occasional exchanges of shotted compliments with the rams and batteries across the obstructions in Dog River, forming the inner line of defense of the city, some four miles distant.

On the 22d of August, the approaches having been completed, the land and naval forces opened a terrific fire on devoted Morgan, and continued it throughout the day with such effect that General Page, command-

ing the garrison, struck his colors and surrendered the next day.

The *Chickasaw* was as conspicuous in the bombardment as she had been in all her work since entering the bay. It was not in Perkins's temperament to be otherwise, and said an eye-witness at the time: "It was a glorious sight to see the gallant Perkins in the *Chickasaw*, nearly all the morning almost touching the wharf, and pouring in his terrible missiles, two at a time, making bricks and mortar fly in all direction, then moving ahead or astern a little to get a fresh place. He stayed there till nearly noon, when he hauled off to cool his guns and give his men some refreshment. In the afternoon, he took his ship in again, and turret after turret was emptied at the poor fort."

Perkins sent home the flag that had flown over the fort during the bombardment; he obtained it in this wise: "The sailors from this ship," said he, "hailed down the flag, and one of them seized it and hid it in his bosom; there was not much left of it; it was riddled and torn. He brought it to me, declaring that no one had a right to it but the captain of the *Chickasaw*. I hardly knew what to do about it; but the man seemed so earnest I could not refuse to take it from him."

The bay was now sealed to blockade runners, and Mobile, measured as to its commercial importance to the Confederacy, might as well have been located among the mountains of northern Alabama as on the gulf; and owing to strategic reasons, operations for its immediate reduction came to a halt. But on the 27th of March, 1865, the land and naval forces began a joint movement against the defenses surrounding the city, and on the 12th of April the Union forces were in full possession. In these last operations, which cost the

loss of two light draught iron-clads, a gunboat, and several other smaller vessels by torpedoes, we may know that the *Chickasaw* was never in the background.

In July, Perkins was relieved from the command and ordered home. He had volunteered for the Mobile fight but had been detained on board the *Chickasaw* nearly thirteen months.

On his arrival home he was overwhelmed with congratulations upon his gallantry and achievements in Mobile Bay; but his friends felt indignant that no promotion had followed them, believing that at least the thirty numbers authorized by statute, "for eminent and conspicuous conduct in battle," could not be reasonably denied him. But he would not work personally toward that end, nor pull political wires to attain it. With him, the promotion must come unasked or not at all. It never came, and others disputed, with unblushing effrontery, the laurels he had won. Not only that, but he has seen, as well as others, those who did the least service during the war, given recognition and place over those who "bore the heat and burden of the day," during those four years so momentous in the annals of the republic.

The following winter he was stationed at New Orleans, in charge of iron-clads, and in May, 1866, was ordered as executive officer of the *Lackawanna*, for a cruise of three years in the North Pacific. The "piping times of peace" had come, and officers who had had important commands now had to take a step back to the regular duties of their grade. Returning from the Pacific in the early spring of 1869, he was ordered to the Boston navy yard on ordnance duty, and in March, 1871, received his commission as commander. Two months later he was selected to command the storeship *Relief*, to carry provisions to the

suffering French of the Franco-German War. On his return, after a lapse of six months, he resumed his duties at the Boston yard, until appointed lighthouse inspector of the Boston district, which position he held until January, 1876.

Meanwhile he had taken to himself a wife, having, in 1870, married Miss Anna Minot Weld of Boston. The issue of the marriage has been one child, a daughter, born in 1877.

From March, 1877, until May, 1879, he was in command of the United States steamer *Ashuelot* on the Asiatic station, making a most interesting cruise, and having, for a time, the pleasure of General Grant's company on board as a guest.

Since his return from that cruise he has been on "waiting orders," varied by occasional duty as member of courts-martial, boards of examination, and the like.

In March, 1882, he was promoted to a post-captaincy, as the grade of captain in the navy was styled in the olden time, which grade corresponds with that of colonel in the army.

Captain Perkins has a house in Boston, where he makes his home in winter, but nothing has ever weakened his affection for the old Granite state, and nothing delights him more, when possible to do so, than to put behind him the whirl and distraction of the city for the quiet enjoyment of the fresh, exhilarating air, unpretentious, wholesome life, and substantial ways that await him among his dear native hills.

In glancing over the "Portraits for Posterity," the writer notes the conspicuous absence of naval representation among the "counterfeit presentments" that adorn the walls of the capitol at Concord and the halls of Dartmouth, and ventures to suggest to Governor

Prescott, the distinguished and indefatigable collector of most of the pictures, that portraits of Thornton of the *Kearsarge*, and Perkins of the *Cayuga* and *Chickasaw*, might fittingly be given place among those who, in the varied walks of life, have lent distinction and added lustre to the Province and State of New Hampshire from colonial times to this. Let not the men of the sea be forgotten !







COMMODORE GEORGE H. PERKINS.

## ADDENDA.

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After the first edition of this book was printed, I met Capt. Horace Herbert of the 16th New Hampshire, who had served during the war. When I found that he had been a witness of the part Captain Perkins bore in the battle of Mobile Bay I was sorry that I had not met him before, as I found his statements fully confirmed the strongest claims made for the *Chickasaw*.

Captain Herbert's regiment was stationed at Pensacola in 1864, and on the morning fixed for our fleet to move up Mobile Bay, General Ashboth, who commanded at Pensacola, took the transport *Clyde* and with a number of officers, among whom was Captain Herbert, went to witness the advance. That need not be recapitulated here, as my only wish is to preserve Captain Herbert's statements about my brother.

He said, "When the *Chickasaw* went past, the only officer visible above her deck was Captain Perkins, and she was watched with the greatest interest, on account of her wonderfully rapid and skillful manœuvring. Being assured of the successful passage of the forts, the *Clyde* returned to Pensacola. The next day the *Metacomet* arrived there from Mobile, bringing both the federal and rebel wounded. Among the latter was Admiral Buchanan, who was feverish from his wound by the time he reached Pensacola, and was longing for ice. I had a little in the storehouse at Barrancas, which I brought down for him, and he was very grateful. He sent for me, that he might express

his thanks in person. After this I often saw him, and he conversed very freely with me. He would talk by the hour about the Mobile fight, and he gave the *whole credit* of the capture of the *Tennessee* to the *Chickasaw*. He said the *Tennessee* would have beaten our entire fleet if it had not been for that monitor, which seemed to move by magic! it would turn round three times to the *Tennessee's* once and seemed to be *everywhere*. He said that the *Tennessee's* crew became exhausted repelling its attacks, while the *Chickasaw's* were as fresh as ever, and in fact, 'she seemed like a very d——l,' to quote Admiral Buchanan's words. He said over and over again how different would have been the result if he could have shaken off that 'd——d little *Chickasaw*.' After the battle Pensacola filled up with officers and men from the ships at Mobile, and no ship but the *Chickasaw* was mentioned in connection with the capture of the *Tennessee*. All were full of enthusiasm about 'little Perkins,' as they called him. It seemed as if they could not praise his courage and good judgment enough; they said his ship was in perfect condition, and the way she was handled was wonderful, for the monitors were hard to manage and she was the only one perfectly available, for the *Tecumseh* was blown up, the *Winnebago's* turrets were out of order, and one of the *Manhattan's* guns disabled. Above all they talked about his great deserts at the hands of the government, and what a shining reward he was *sure* to receive for his brilliant services. Every mail was expected to bring his promotion."

I was very glad to hear this from Captain Herbert, a perfectly well-known citizen and a man of undoubted truth. I regretted not having met him in season to incorporate his testimony in the body of the book, and now can only preserve it in this form.

The following extract is from the New York *Tribune*:

*To the Editor of the Tribune:*

SIR:—The article in yesterday's edition of your paper entitled "Three Generations of Naval Officers," will doubtless surprise many officers of the navy, and they will wonder where the writer obtained his information. I am not at all disposed to be hypercritical, and would not attempt to correct the mistakes contained in the article, were it not for the fact that one of the statements detracts from the credit which properly belongs to another. My first acquaintance with the late Rear Admiral T. W. A. Nicholson was on board the *Raritan* in 1849, and he was then known as War Horse Nicholson, and from that time to the present I have seldom heard his name mentioned without that prefix. I was on board the *Tennessee* shortly after the Mobile fight and made a careful examination of that vessel, and can testify that but two of the *Manhattan's* shots struck her, one doing no damage whatever, and the other merely breaking the iron plating, splintering the wooden backing, and then dropping into the water.

The real cause of the surrender, as was well known and freely admitted by all at the time, was the fortunate jamming of the rudder chains by the eleven-inch guns of the *Chickasaw*, Lieutenant (now Captain) George H. Perkins in command, that officer in the most gallant style placing his vessel immediately under the stern of his formidable adversary and pegging away until he had succeeded in rendering her an almost helpless hulk, and the only shot that penetrated the *Tennessee* was one fired from Perkins's vessel, which penetrated by the way of one of the after ports of the casemate, and which in its flight struck a gun carriage, a splinter from which wounded Admiral Buchanan. It is also a mistake to say that the *Manhattan's* boats were shot away, as Commander Nicholson promptly repaired on board the flag-ship in one of his own boats immediately after the surrender of the *Tennessee*.

I trust that you will give the foregoing a place in your paper, in justice to "The Hero of Mobile Bay," whose gallantry will never be forgotten by those who witnessed his daring attack of the *Tennessee*, and whose bravery on that occasion saved Admiral Farragut's fleet from almost certain destruction.

J. H. G.\*

BINGHAMTON, July 16, 1888.

\* Capt. James H. Gillis, U. S. Navy.

## PROMOTION TO COMMODORE.

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Time passed away, and with the country restored to quiet, the survivors of the "Great Conflict" began to analyze and dwell on its events. Many of them wrote down their experiences, and a period of inquiry and research began. Under these circumstances it was not strange that Captain Perkins's name became prominent or that the question (old as the days of King Ahasuerus), "What honor and dignity hath been done him for this?" was often asked again.

In the meantime it was most gratifying to receive a vast amount of testimony as to the value of the records contained in this book. A single specimen is selected, subjoined from almost countless letters. It is from Prof. Charles S. Sargent, of Harvard University, who, during the war, was an officer in a Massachusetts regiment sent to the attack on Mobile, where he formed his friendship with Captain Perkins. He writes :

MY DEAR PERKINS: I have read your book from end to end, and am delighted with it. I wish you would send copies to the Boston Public Library, the Boston Atheneum, the Brookline Public Library, the Library of Harvard College.

As you are modest, you may, if you like, put my name to the packages.

Your records are too important to be lost, and the only way to make sure of their preservation is to put them in public libraries.

Professor Sargent's request was complied with in the form he suggested.

At last in 1896, Senator Gallinger, always full of energy and enthusiasm to advance the interests of his state

and enhance the lustre of its name, experienced a desire to demand from the government a recognition of Captain Perkins's services, and gave to his kindly feeling the following practical expression. On December 3, 1895, he introduced the following bill into the senate which was read twice, and referred to Committee on Naval Affairs:

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

DECEMBER 3, 1895.

Mr. GALLINGER introduced the following bill, which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Naval Affairs:

A BILL FOR THE RELIEF OF CAPTAIN GEORGE H. PERKINS.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of*  
 2 *the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That Captain  
 3 George H. Perkins, who was retired as captain after forty years'  
 4 faithful service upon the active list of the United States Navy, as  
 5 provided by section fourteen hundred and forty-three, Revised  
 6 Statutes, and who had honorable service in the late civil war,  
 7 shall be placed on the retired list with the rank of commodore  
 8 without the corresponding increased pay, but receiving only the  
 9 retired pay of captain of the Navy.

When this bill was returned from the Naval Committee, Mr. Chandler submitted the following report:

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

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JANUARY 27, 1896.—Ordered to be printed.

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Mr. CHANDLER, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany S. 129.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs favorably report the bill (S. 129) giving Capt. George H. Perkins, now upon the retired list, the rank of commodore upon such list. The bill does not increase his pay nor give to him any pecuniary emoluments or benefits whatever, but

merely awards special recognition and honor to an officer of such distinguished merit as to fairly call for this mark of approbation from Congress. This is one of the few opportunities remaining to extend such gratifications to living officers of the Navy on account of their personal gallantry in battle, shown in this case when the officer was lieutenant and executive officer of the *Cayuga* in the battle below New Orleans in April, 1862, and when he was lieutenant-commander in command of their iron-clad *Chickasaw* in the battle of Mobile Bay in August, 1864.

Captain Perkins's military career is in every respect highly creditable. He was born in Hopkinton, N. H., December 20, 1836, and was educated at the Naval Academy, becoming an acting midshipman in 1851, a lieutenant February 2, 1861, a lieutenant-commander December 13, 1862, a commander January 19, 1871, and a captain March 10, 1882. He was executive officer of the *Cayuga* under Lieut. Commander N. B. Harrison at the passage of Forts Jackson and St. Philip and the capture of New Orleans by Farragut's fleet on April 24, 1862. Capt. Theodorus Bailey (afterwards rear admiral) was the second in command, and, heading the whole fleet in the *Cayuga*, led the second division past the forts.

Admiral Bailey's biographer says :

He led the attack in the gunboat *Cayuga*, passing up ahead of the fleet through the fire of five of the forts, sustaining unaided the attack of the Confederate vessels, rams, and fire rafts, and passed through them to the city.

Admiral Bailey says :

We in the *Cayuga* alone encountered the rebel iron-clads *Louisiana* and *Manassas* and their flotilla of gunboats and maintained unaided a conflict with them until Boggs, in the *Varuna*, came up, and after delivering a broadside, which came into the *Cayuga* as well as the enemy in conflict with us, he passed up the river out of sight. . . . After seeing our (*Cayuga's*) third prize in flames we steamed up the river and captured the Chalmette regiment. . . . Lieut. Commander N. B. Harrison was gallantly sustained by Lieut. George H. Perkins and Acting Master Thomas H. Morton. These officers have my unbounded admiration.

Commander Harrison, in his report to Captain Bailey, says :

It is needless for me to inform you—you had us under your own eyes—that all did their duty fearlessly and well ; but I must commend to your special notice my executive officer, Lieut. George H. Perkins. The remarkable coolness and precision of this young officer while aiding me in steering the



vessel through the barrier and past the forts under their long and heavy fire must have attracted your attention.

After the passage of the forts, Farragut sent Bailey to receive the surrender of the city of New Orleans, and he took Lieutenant Perkins with him. Nicolay and Hay say :

It was an imprudent exposure of his most valuable officer, for as Bailey with a single companion walked from the landing to the city hall they were followed by a noisy and insulting street rabble, cheering for Jefferson Davis and uttering wild threats of violence ; the resolute and self-possessed bearing of the two officers alone saved them.

After Perkins was promoted to be lieutenant-commander he was given the command of the *New London* on the Mississippi river, ran the batteries at Port Hudson successfully five times, and had a severe skirmish with the enemy at Whitehall Point.

From July, 1863, he was in command of the *Sciota* of the Gulf Squadron until April, 1864, when he was relieved, but volunteered to stay for the battle of Mobile Bay. Admiral Farragut reported :

I cannot give too much praise to Lieutenant-Commander Perkins who, although he had orders to return North, volunteered to take command of the *Chickasaw* and did his duty nobly.

How well he performed that duty appears from the graphic account given by Nicolay and Hay of the fight below Mobile. After Farragut's fleet had successfully passed the batteries at Fort Morgan, and there was a lull in the fighting, the formidable rebel ram *Tennessee* was seen making directly for the *Hartford*, Farragut's flagship. All the Union ships were signaled to attack her, but her capture was no easy task, although finally accomplished.

The *Chickasaw* got under the stern of the *Tennessee* and hung on like a bulldog, keeping up an obstinate fire with her four eleven-inch guns. A lucky shot severed the tiller chains of the *Tennessee* ; her smoke-stack was shot away and the smoke poured in suffocating volumes, upon the gun deck. . . . The *Tennessee* was a noble prize, despite her injuries, which were such as could be easily repaired. . . . The *Chickasaw*, the most efficient of the iron-clads, energetically continued the day's work. After towing the prize to her anchorage near the flagship she steamed down to Fort Powell, taking the work in reverse, and bombarded it for an hour. When night came on the fort was evacuated and blown up. On the 7th, after a heavy shelling from the *Chickasaw*, Col. C. D. Anderson, commanding Fort Gaines, surrendered with his entire garrison of over 800 men.

On such authentic records as the above concerning the passage of the New Orleans forts, the capture of the city, and the battle of Mobile Bay, Captain Perkins's fame securely rests. After his promotion to his present grade he continued in active service, and was in command at sea for eleven months, as captain of the flagship in the Pacific Squadron, with Rear Admiral John H. Upshur. On his retirement, after forty years in the Navy, he had been on shore duty ten years and seven months and at sea fifteen years and four months, making his full share of sea service.

Without exaggerating his achievements or merits, it may be said that no naval officer in the War of the Rebellion exceeded him in military skill and personal courage, or is more entitled to the gratitude of his countrymen.

Further details of his notable career may be found in a sketch of his life written by Rear Admiral George E. Belknap, and published in April, 1884, in the *Bay State Monthly*, afterwards called the *Massachusetts Magazine*, and also printed in the *Granite Monthly* at Concord, N. H. Many official letters throwing a bright light upon his naval exploits may be found (edited and arranged by his sister, Miss Susan G. Perkins, and published with a reprint of the sketch of Admiral Belknap) in a volume issued at Concord in 1886.

The action now proposed in Captain Perkins's behalf is recommended by the present Secretary of the Navy in a letter, as follows :

NAVY DEPARTMENT,

WASHINGTON, December 11, 1894.

SIR: Referring to the letter, dated the 6th instant, of the Committee on Naval Affairs of the Senate, transmitting, for such recommendation as this Department may deem proper to make, Senate bill 2,340, "For the relief of Capt. George H. Perkins," and referring also to the Department's letter of the 8th *idem*, acknowledging the receipt thereof, I have the honor to state that in view of the exceptionally distinguished record made by this officer during the late war, as fully set forth in Report No. 1,498, Fifty-second Congress, first session, made by the Committee on Naval Affairs of the House of Representatives under date of May 26, 1892, and in view also of the fact that the bill now pending does not provide for any increase of the pay of Captain Perkins, I recommend the bill to the favorable consideration of the committee.

Very respectfully,

H. A. HERBERT, *Secretary*.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS,

*United States Senate.*

The proposition to give Captain Perkins the rank of commodore on the retired list passed the Senate on July 1, 1892, in Senate bill No.

2,965, hereafter alluded to, but did not pass the House, although favorably reported on July 15, 1892, as hereafter appears.

The reasons for the passage of the bill have been given in various reports of the Senate and House committees, as appears by the copies hereto annexed, as follows :

[House Report No. 1,899, Fifty-second Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2,965) for the relief of Capt. George H. Perkins, having had the same under consideration, beg leave to submit the following report :

A House bill identical in its provisions (H. R. 8,264) has been considered and favorably reported from this committee. (House Report No. 1,498, Fifty-second Congress.)

Your committee adopt the report as filed with the bill already on the Calendar, and for the reasons therein set forth herewith recommend the passage of the Senate bill (S. 2,965) in lieu of the bill of the House.

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[House Report No. 1,498, Fifty-second Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 8,264) for the relief of Capt. George H. Perkins, United States Navy, respectfully report :

Your committee having examined into the merits of this case, find that the Senate report of this session fully sets out the facts, as this committee has ascertained upon its own investigation, and the Senate report, with its recommendation, we adopt as to the present bill. The said report is as follows :

[Senate Report No. 665, Fifty-second Congress, first session.]

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2,965) for the relief of Capt. George H. Perkins, have considered the same and recommend its passage.

It should be borne in mind that this bill does not propose any increase of pay for Captain Perkins, it being expressly stipulated that his pay shall not be that of a commodore, but that which he is now receiving as a captain. It does provide, however, for his promotion to the rank of commodore without the corresponding pay, and your committee believes that by reason of his brilliant record and term of service it is but just to allow him such rank.

Captain Perkins entered the naval service of the United States on October 1, 1851, and served actively and continuously for forty years, retiring on October 1, 1891, with the rank of captain. During this period his services were of the most brilliant character, as is evidenced by the following :

*Extracts from testimony relating to the services of Capt. George H. Perkins, United States Navy, retired, performed in the battle below New Orleans in April, 1862, and the battle of Mobile Bay in August, 1864.*

In the battle below New Orleans Lieut. George H. Perkins was the executive officer of the *Cayuga*, of which Capt. T. Bailey, second in command of the fleet, afterwards Admiral Bailey, makes the following report :

. . . "On the 28th of April both the forts surrendered to Commander Porter. . . . Lieut. Commander N. B. Harrison was gallantly sustained by Lieut. George H. Perkins and Acting Master Thomas H. Morton. These officers have my unbounded admiration."

Commander N. B. Harrison, in his report to Captain Bailey, commanding the leading division of the gunboats, says :

"It is needless for me to inform you—you had us under your own eyes—that all did their duty fearlessly and well ; but I must commend to your special notice my executive officer, Lieut. George H. Perkins. The remarkable coolness and precision of this young officer while aiding me in steering the vessel through the barrier and past the forts under their long and heavy fire must have attracted your attention."

Lieutenant Perkins was the officer who with Captain Bailey was selected to make the landing on the levee at New Orleans with a flag of truce to demand the surrender of the city.

In the battle of Mobile Lieutenant-Commander Perkins was placed in command of the iron-clad *Chickasaw*.

The following extract is from a review written for the *Nation* by Gen. J. C. Palfrey on Commander Parker's account of the battle of Mobile Bay :

"Lieutenant-Commander Perkins, of the *Chickasaw*, had been ordered North, but asked for and obtained permission to wait until he had carried his monitor through the expected fight. Though one of the youngest officers in command of a ship, he had the sagacity to reflect that in a strange harbor, full of torpedoes, he would be safer alongside of the enemy's vessel, which for its own safety might be expected to keep clear of torpedoes. Consequently he kept close under the stern of the *Tennessee* and would not be thrown off, and pounded away at close quarters with his 11-inch guns. He succeeded in jamming one of her ports and opening a breach for his shells to her interior, and to him Commodore Parker awards the praise of giving the vital wound which caused her surrender."

The *New York Herald* correspondent, under date of August 20, 1864, alluding to the surrender of the *Tennessee*, writes as follows :

"The final shots that terminated the career of the rebel vessel were fired by the monitor *Chickasaw*, which passed close under her stern, giving her the full weight of two 11-inch solid shot from her forward turret, which damaged the covering of the ram's stern ports.

"Buchanan went aft with his engineer to readjust the port cover. While

engaged in this operation the *Chickasaw* brought her after turret to bear, one shot from which carried away the tiller chains of the *Tennessee*, rendering her unmanageable, while the other shot entered the damaged port, killing one man and fracturing Buchanan's leg."

From a "Chapter in History," published by Captain James B. Eads in defense of his monitors, we copy the following closing sentence:

"The *Chickasaw* obtained a position under the stern of the rebel ram and poured in such a storm of 11-inch solid steel and cast-iron shot that the flag of the ram was finally hauled down to her.

"Throughout the fight the *Tennessee* found it impossible to get out of the raking fire in which she was held by this iron-clad, in which position the latter delivered fifty-two 11-inch shot at her. Her commander, George H. Perkins, was handsomely complimented by Farragut."

The Concord (N. H.) *Statesman*, commenting upon this paper, in an editorial, with excusable local pride, says:

"The battle of Mobile Bay was one of the great battles of the war, and no ship's commander engaged in it was entitled to half as much credit for gallantry and good judgment and persistency as Perkins. He captured the *Tennessee* and laid beside her modestly awaiting an officer of higher rank to come up in his ship and receive the surrender. By this the reader will infer, which is a fact, that Commander Perkins is as modest as he is brave. His record all through the war is of the very highest character."

Commodore Parker, in his account of the battle of Mobile Bay, writes:

"But the vessel that undoubtedly inflicted the most injury upon the ram was the monitor *Chickasaw*, commanded by Lieutenant-Commander Perkins, 'which hung,' said the pilot of the *Tennessee*, 'close under our stern. Move as we would, she was always there, firing the two 11-inch guns in her forward turret like pocket pistols, so that she soon had the plates flying in the air.'"

The following extract is taken from the report of Rear Admiral D. G. Farragut, of August 12, 1864:

"Our iron-clads from their slow speed and bad steering had some difficulty in getting into and maintaining their position in line as we passed the forts, and in the subsequent encounter with the *Tennessee* from the same causes were not as effective as could have been desired; but I cannot give too much praise to Lieutenant-Commander Perkins, who, though he had orders from the Department to return North, volunteered to take command of the *Chickasaw*, and did his duty nobly."

Such was the impression made by Perkins's services in this battle that Captain James B. Eads, the builder of the *Chickasaw*, when he heard the results of the battle and the surpassing part of the *Chickasaw* in it, said: "I would walk fifty miles to shake hands with the young man who commanded her."

Said Captain Johnston, who commanded the *Tennessee* (in the same vein) :

"If it had not been for that d——d black hulk hanging on our stern we would have gotten on well enough. She did us more damage than all the rest of the federal fleet."

Capt. Horace Herbert, Sixteenth New Hampshire regiment, whose regiment was stationed at Pensacola, was present with General Ashboth, who commanded at Pensacola, on board of the *Clyde*, which went out to witness the advance of the fleet. The next day, when the wounded were brought back, Admiral Buchanan, who was under obligations to Captain Herbert for courtesies extended him, sent for him that he might express his thanks in person. To him he conversed freely about the Mobile fight. The following is Captain Herbert's account of it :

"He [Buchanan] said the *Tennessee* would have defeated the entire fleet if it had not been for that monitor, which seemed to move by magic. It would turn around three times to the *Tennessee's* once, and seemed to be everywhere. He said that the *Tennessee's* crew became exhausted replying to his attacks, while the *Chickasaw's* was as fresh as ever, and, in fact, they seemed like a very d——l, and to quote Admiral Buchanan's words, he said over and over again how different would have been the result if he could have shaken off that d——d little *Chickasaw*."

As an evidence of Admiral Farragut's appreciation of Perkins we quote from a letter of a distinguished officer :

"Mr. McRitchie tells me that Farragut said to him less than a month before the Admiral's death, when talking about the Gulf Squadron, that Captain Perkins was young and handsome, and that no braver man ever trod a vessel's deck, and further commended in the highest terms his work in the *Chickasaw* against the *Tennessee*."

These extracts are made not in disparagement of the splendid services rendered by other officers, but to show the excellency of Perkins's achievements, and the appreciation of them at that time, and from that period to his voluntary retirement, after forty years' active service in the navy, on the 1st day of October, A. D. 1891, he enjoyed an unbroken reputation as a most accomplished officer.

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The bill now recommended for passage was introduced in the Senate on December 3, 1895, by Senator Gallinger of New Hampshire, and is as follows :

#### A BILL for the relief of Captain George H Perkins.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That Captain George H. Perkins, who was retired as captain after forty years' faithful service upon the active list of the United States Navy, as provided by section fourteen hundred

and forty-three, Revised Statutes, and who had honorable service in the late civil war, shall be placed on the retired list with the rank of commodore without the corresponding increased pay, but receiving only the retired pay of captain of the navy.

May 4, 1896, Mr. Baker of New Hampshire rose in the House and addressed the speaker, asking unanimous consent for the present consideration of the bill for the promotion of Captain George H. Perkins.

The bill was read, and the speaker asked, "Is there any objection to the present consideration of the bill?"

Mr. Bailey of Texas.—Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a special stipulation that this shall not increase the pay of this officer. May I inquire, then, what the purpose of the bill is except to merely increase the rank?

Mr. Baker.—The purpose is to increase the rank. This gentleman, I will state, is so fortunately situated that he does not care for the additional pay. His friends ask this, as an appropriate recognition of his services.

There being no objection, the bill was considered, and then ordered to a third reading; and being read a third time it was passed.

Captain Perkins's commission for commodore received the signature of the president, Grover Cleveland, and dates from May 9, 1896.

SPECIAL ORDER }  
No. 90. }

NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, *November 1, 1899.*

The Department deems it proper to give official notice of the death of Commodore GEORGE HAMILTON PERKINS, who died in Boston on the 29th ultimo, in the 64th year of his age.

Commodore PERKINS was appointed an Acting Midshipman in October, 1851, and placed on the Retired List, October 1, 1891. During this long period he earned the high respect and confidence of the Navy and the country. Conspicuous among his services was the well-remembered part which the iron-clad *Chickasaw*, commanded by him, took in the capture of the ram *Tennessee*, at the battle of Mobile Bay. On May 9, 1896, Commodore PERKINS was promoted to Commodore, by a special act of Congress, for his distinguished services during the Rebellion, an honor seldom conferred.

As a mark of respect to his memory, the flags of the navy yards and stations, and vessels in commission, will be displayed at half-mast from sunrise to sunset, and eleven minute guns will be fired at noon from the navy yards and stations, on the day after the receipt of this order.

JOHN D. LONG,  
*Secretary.*









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